

Bound by Luv_Haze

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: M/M

Language: English

Characters: Billy Hargrove, Dustin Henderson, Jonathan Byers, Nancy Wheeler, Steve Harrington

Relationships: Billy Hargrove & Steve Harrington, Billy Hargrove/Steve Harrington, Harringrove - Relationship

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2018-07-30

Updated: 2018-09-08

Packaged: 2022-04-23 02:35:40

Rating: Explicit

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 11

Words: 38,544

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

Steve's high school sociology class suddenly becomes the focal point of his dreary winter in Hawkins when the teacher assigns a semester long project that makes absolutely no sense but apparently counts for his entire grade.

The class assignment reads: "This semester we will be understanding social roles in a pack or clan like dynamic through the wonderful world of Alpha, Beta and Omega personalities!"

And Steve's individual assignment is a string of several words that coil deep in his gut and might as well be in Klingon. "You are Omega #1. Mated to Alpha #1."

He hopes his "alpha" partner is anyone but that jackass Billy Hargrove, but then this just hasn't been Steve's year, has it?

1. Chapter 1

Author's Note:

I usually come up with an idea and know the ending before I start writing, but in this case, I only have the beginning in mind and I want to let the characters lead this story so feel free to pop ideas into the comments as this is mostly a blank canvas :)

I tend to write explicit so I'll raise the rating once we get there.

"Alright class, when I call you up, bring your designation slip so I can write it down and then I'll give you your individual assignments," Miss Clemens said, beaming with her hands clasped together in front of her like she'd just won an award. Steve could hardly care but something fluttered in his gut. Not *for* Miss Clemens, god no. But something about the energy of what she was saying struck him as... oddly enticing and yet nerve wracking.

He unfolded his piece of paper again. *You are Omega #1. Mated to Alpha #1.*

Steve's eyes lingered over the word *mated*. It seemed so intimate.

Not like in sophomore year when they all had to pair up as pseudo parents and take care of an egg for two weeks; it hadn't felt intimate between the partners at all. Thankfully, his egg had survived, mostly because of his partner, Allison Cunningham, but he had taken it for an entire weekend by himself and was proud of his egg-parenting results. Shit, maybe he really did have a natural talent for being a babysitter now that he thought about it.

"Jonathan Byers," Miss Clemens voice rang out happily.

Steve glanced around and caught Nancy's eyes as Jonathan got up. He was happy for them, really, but now that the holidays were over and the gate was closed, all the excitement had died down and Steve was finding the cold winter days of January less than stellar. Boring

really. And a little lonely if he was being honest with himself.

One by one, the students shuffled up to Miss Clemens' desk, showed her the slip of paper they'd drawn from the wicker basket earlier, watched her scribble something in her spiraled grade book then received a sealed envelope before sitting back down.

"Billy Hargrove," Miss Clemens chirped, already to the H's.

Steve's eyes dropped to his desk as a tight, jean clad hip brushed so close to his arm that it almost made contact. Not that he was looking. He wasn't, which is why he lowered his eyes, he wasn't about to look at his ass but it was like *right there* because Billy walked a little too close to him even though there was *plenty* of room in the aisle. What a dick.

The last bit of yellow bruising had finally faded from Steve's face just a few days ago, their fight in November finally something the mirror would no longer remind him of, but he wouldn't forget and he'd steered very clear of Billy since. Not because he was afraid of him, he wasn't, but he needed to interact with Billy like he needed a hole in his head.

And now Billy was in yet *another* one of his classes, the first being gym and now Sociology. Fucking awesome.

Steve had been blissfully clueless about Sociology when Nancy had signed them up for it at the beginning of the year, but he'd been all aboard because he'd heard it was a fun class, especially since it mixed Juniors and Seniors and rarely had quizzes or tests. But since it was one of those classes you only took for one semester and he'd had a different class the same period in the fall, he had no idea what to expect from this teacher or this assignment. So far, the first day of class was rather...interesting to say the least.

"Steve Harrington."

The hair on Steve's arm stood up at the call of his name. The sensation alarmed him, because it felt intuitive, but about what he didn't know. This was just another dumb high school project, right? He didn't even know what omega meant really, but he understood

the word alpha enough. He just couldn't imagine what kind of assignment this was going to be.

Still, it was the word *mated* that churned through his mind and threw him off.

Like, a lot.

At the same time Steve made his way down the aisle, Billy was on his way back to his seat. Their eyes flicked together, but Billy looked away first, which...who cared, but it struck Steve for some reason, burrowed into his psyche that it meant something maybe.

When Steve got to the teacher's enormous wooden desk, he showed her his slip of paper, feeling a twinge of worry when her eyes narrowed and she snatched it out of his hands. She studied it for a moment as if she wasn't reading her own handwriting and had never seen it before, but then her lips quirked up into a grin and she handed it back to him. Her pencil started moving and Steve swallowed hard.

Had she done that with anyone else? Shit, he hadn't been paying attention when the others went up, definitely hadn't noticed what happened when Jonathan or Billy had shown her their slip. Everything about her reaction just settled into his bones, whispering that something was up and this was only just the beginning. But Christ, the beginning of what? Steve contemplated that he might be a little off kilter today and reading into things, maybe he was tired or hungry or had the winter blues. It was pretty gray outside and it had been days since he'd felt any sunshine on his face.

"Steve," Miss Clemens voice snapped his attention back to her and the envelope she was holding out for him.

He grabbed it, perhaps a little slower than he usually would, but it was kind of hard when she was pinning him down with her eyes. What the fuck. Miss Clemens was a total nerd, basically a female Dustin in her early thirties. Probably single, hence the *Miss* part, but she was that one teacher that some of the guys would say they'd like to get their hands on, but only because she was relatively easy on the eyes and fulfilled the librarian fantasy.

And not the hot librarian fantasy where a hot girl dressed up like a librarian, but like, the chunky oversized wool sweaters and tights thicker than most socks type of librarian. Minus the glasses and bun.

And yet here she was, staring him down with a look that someone like her *shouldn't* be capable of using. And then she smiled and her usual dorky but sweet face was back.

"Thank you, Mr. Harrington," she said and he realized he was still standing frozen by the desk. "Let me know if you have any questions tomorrow."

Feeling a bit creeped out by *everything*, he returned to his seat, sat down and slid the envelope into his notebook. They were supposed to wait and open them at home then they'd know what the assignment was about, but the itch under Steve's skin demanded he find out sooner rather than later so as soon as the bell rang, he bolted out of his desk and headed to the bathroom.

He ignored the two freshman boys primping their hair in the mirrors and hustled into the stall furthest from the door, swearing when the lock wouldn't catch and he had to fuck with it to get it to work. He tore the side of the envelope open and slid the paper out, confused as to why his hands were shaking. Maybe he really was hungry and he needed some sugar or something fast.

Assignment for Omega #1

This semester we will be understanding social roles in a pack or clan like dynamic through the wonderful world of Alpha, Beta and Omega personalities!

Each student has been given one of three designations. Due to the nature of social roles, hierarchies and clan mentalities, there are more betas than alphas and omegas combined.

Steve skipped down several paragraphs that seemed to be explaining the concept of the project until his eyes found words that quickened his heart rate.

Congratulations! You are mated to Alpha #1, the leader of the entire

clan.

Mated pairs are important to the functionality of the clan. Your first assignment is to find the Alpha you are mated to and make friends with the other omegas by Friday. You cannot tell anyone what your role is in order to complete this assignment, you must read up on the dynamics of your identity and find your mate and your kindred omegas by posturing and personality alone.

Steve's brain short circuited.

What?

Fuck, it was like that time he glanced over one of Mike's D&D campaigns. It made no sense because it was using a bunch of jargon he didn't understand.

You are only mated to one Alpha and they will be your partner for the rest of the project. You will be graded together and individually within the relationship. Your alpha has instructions as well regarding your relationship and as the omega, your role is to submit to the alpha's leadership and protection.

There are a total of four omegas in the class so you are to find the other three and sit with them during Friday's class. You will be graded as a group and individually as an omega.

The instructions seemed to go on forever, but Steve knew enough to know he was probably going to fail if immediate comprehension of the assignment was part of the grade. And how was he supposed to submit to one of his classmates? What the hell did that even mean?

Steve refolded the paper and shoved it into his notebook. He'd have to properly read it later, once he got home, and take notes on what exactly he was being graded on.

Maybe his partner would be cool. Hey, maybe it was Nancy or Jonathan, that could be fun to play pretend submitting to one of them, maybe. Or shit, maybe not. But then a face flashed through Steve's mind and his heart raced *again*. Jesus Christ, Billy fucking Hargrove was in the class too.

But no, the odds were in his favor, right? He couldn't be *that* unlucky. Twenty-one students meant there was a good chance he'd end up with someone else as his partner and he wouldn't be stuck with the guy that beat him unconscious less than two months ago. If he ended paired up with that psycho, he'd need protection *from* Billy.

God, like literally anyone else would be better than Billy Hargrove. Anyone.

Then the hair on Steve's arms raised again and that feeling was back, but this time, he knew what it felt like...a low, thrumming electricity.

Something inside Steve *just knew* that he was so fucked.

Notes for the Chapter:

Miss Clemens basically symbolizes all of us awesome fanfic readers and writers and what we'd want to do if we were in that world and could be like... "Billy, go stand there, okay now Steve... you're in love with Billy, stop pouting, you'll love it!" And since it's the 80s and she doesn't have the wonderful internet, she's having her students play out her A/B/O scenarios as an assignment. Their Sociology class is our Archive of Our Own hahahahahaha.

Oh and we're all waaaaaay cooler than her XD. Maybe. Let's hope. Fingers crossed!

2. Chapter 2

Summary for the Chapter:

Let the posturing in class begin!

“Yeah, yeah, this is...okay, yeah, I understand this,” Dustin said, holding Steve’s assignment in his hand.

They were in the parking lot after school, sitting in Steve’s car with the heat on. Steam from the exhaust billowed up by the passenger side window behind Dustin’s curly head. It was freezing outside, but thankfully toasty in the car. Steve still hadn’t had a chance to thoroughly read the instructions, but either way, what he had read might as well be in Klingon.

“You do?” Steve asked.

Dustin’s eyes moved across the paper again. “Yeah, so...you’re an omega and you’re married to one of your classmates, who is an alpha.”

“Yeah, I figured all that out on my own, thanks for nothing Einstein.” Steve rolled his eyes.

“Awwww, all on your own? That’s great, Steve, maybe there’s hope for you yet.” Dustin dodged Steve’s hand. “Watch the hair! As I was saying, you are hitched to the leader of the entire clan and I don’t mean to alarm you or anything, but you’re like...the girl. Which means, whoever your partner is, is the dude.”

Steve snorted. His life was just ridiculous at this point. Battles with the Upside Down, being friends with his ex-girlfriend and her new boyfriend, den mother to a bunch of junior high kids and having no real life anymore...sure, let’s be the girl in a fake high school assignment marriage too, why the fuck not? Somehow, this is *not* what Steve thought life would be about.

“My partner could be a girl. It could be Nancy or Donna or any of the

girls in class.” Steve wished his own words made him feel better but that feeling hadn’t left him. The *you’re fucking stuck with Billy Hargrove and you know it* feeling that he hoped wasn’t a psychic prediction for the rest of his semester.

Dustin stared at him for a long moment. “As the alpha, she’d still be the dude in the relationship and you’d basically be the chick. Dude is such a great word, don’t you think. Dude. *Dude*. DUDE.” Dustin said it several times, testing how it sounded from different intonations. What a dweeb.

Steve ran his hands down his face then let them rest on the top of his steering wheel. “Okay, fine, so I’m the chick, fuck my life, so then what? How do I find my partner without actually saying that I’m an omega?”

Dustin skimmed over the assignment again. “Ah, posturing. Okay so as an omega, you naturally submit to alphas so...think about wolves. The head alpha wolf can stare down anyone in the pack, right? So that means everyone submits by *not* staring down the head honcho.”

“Got it. So don’t look in anyone’s eyes.”

“What? No, Jesus Steve, you have to interact with people, you can’t just look at the floor. You meet their eyes *and then* you have to look down first. That lets them know you’re not in charge. That’s submitting! And if you both look down, then it’s not an alpha. An alpha won’t look away first. Unless it’s with a stronger alpha but that’s not your problem so don’t worry about that. You only have to be an omega.”

Steve let his head drop back against the headrest. How was this assignment real? He’d never heard of anything like this before.

“I have a book on wolf packs if you want to borrow it,” Dustin said, sounding excited.

Steve put the car in reverse and backed out of the spot. “If you think it’ll help.”

“This assignment is really detailed,” Dustin said, still reading over it

as Steve flipped his blinker on and turned onto the main road. “The teacher must have spent days working this all out. Weeks even. Look, it says *when you find your mate, let your alpha nuzzle your neck*. Steve, someone is going to nuzzle you!”

Steve glanced over. “What? Nuzzle my...stop making things up.”

Dustin shook his head and turned the paper around as if Steve could actually read the small print while driving. “Dude, that’s what it says. You *have* to tell me when you get your neck nuzzled. Hey, do you need to practice? If so, I can totally nuzzle your neck.”

Steve slammed on the brakes and pointed at the passenger side door. “Out!”

“It’s twenty degrees outside!” Dustin’s face crumpled. “I’m sorry, I’m sorry, okay, no nuzzling, just...please don’t make me walk, I forgot my hat today.”

Steve stared him down, really trying his best not to laugh. Truth be told, he wouldn’t make him walk even if it were seventy-five degrees outside, he just liked watching the little spaz freak out. It never got old. Never.

“There is no way you and I are ever *nuzzling* anything together, you got that? No way.” Steve wagged his finger back and forth between them. “Save the nuzzling for your girlfriends. When you’re thirty.”

“No nuzzling. Got it.” Dustin grinned. “Wait, what if the person that has to nuzzle you is a boy!”

Steve eased off the brake and started driving again. “Uh, it’s probably a girl.”

“But what if it’s a boy? It *could* be a boy, right?”

Steve paused. His mind still hadn’t caught up with the idea that he was getting nuzzled in the first place, much less the possibility he’d be nuzzled by a guy. There was no precedence for such a thing in his life outside of a romantic relationship.

“Christ, are you trying to jinx me? Stop saying it might be a boy.”

“But *if* it is, what are you going to do?” Dustin asked.

Steve hesitated. “I need a good grade in this class so I’ll just have to, you know, get it over with or something.”

“Oh,” Dustin said.

It was the shortest sentence Steve had ever heard him utter. Jesus, this assignment was so off the wall that it even made the one kid who was never speechless, speechless.

Steve turned onto Dustin’s street.

“Do you want to come in and have Oreos and milk? I can help you outline what you’re supposed to do because, no offense, these are really complicated instructions and you seem lost and a little tense but you, my friend, are in luck, because I’m practically an expert on wolf packs,” Dustin said.

Steve looked at him. “Expert, huh? You get that qualification from reading *one* book?”

Dustin opened his mouth to speak but Steve cut him off.

“Fine, yes, I’ll come in. Just...I don’t want to hear about how I eat my Oreos wrong again,” Steve said. He really did need all the help he could get and Dustin seemed enthusiastic about wolf packs so why not.

“You’re supposed to twist the cookie off first, everyone knows that!”

“Cool people dunk the entire cookie,” Steve said. “And we both know I’m cool, so...suck on that, short stuff.”

Dustin recoiled as if he’d just heard the most horrifying thing ever. “You have no respect for the Oreo, Steve. No respect. But fine, if you want to dunk them and ruin a perfectly good snack, then so be it. I can’t stop you from decimating one of America’s most precious and beloved cookies, but I can and will judge you in the silence of my mind.”

“Judge away, man, judge away,” Steve said, relaxing now that he and

Dustin were bantering up a storm. Maybe the assignment wouldn't seem so bad if he got to hear it through Dustin's rambunctious mouth first.

~*~

The next day, Steve slid into his seat at the beginning of Sociology, eyes down. Outlining the assignment at Dustin's house had turned into a huge help, the kid knew his stuff and had pointed out that all the posturing and finding partners would only be done in class. Thankfully, they were to act normal outside of class as to not cause confusion or confrontation. It was also fun to go over it with Dustin because the kid's face would turn red and he'd stutter out some lame denial each time he gushed about wanting to be in the class too and Steve teased him that he just wanted to get nuzzled already.

Steve reviewed his outline and waited for the implosion of what he considered to be the hybrid child of a teenage angst clusterfuck meets junior high dance awkwardness for the students. What was Miss Clemens thinking with this assignment? It was so...weird.

The other students filed into their seats and Billy's hip *actually* grazed his shoulder this time as he walked by. Dickhead.

Billy better be a beta, because the last thing the class needed was that asshole being a fucking alpha. Or worse, *his* alpha. Because his alpha had to nuzzle his fucking neck.

Steve closed his eyes and prayed. He prayed for Billy to be a beta and to stop fucking walking so close to him. He prayed for his partner to be someone like Jonathan or Nancy. He prayed Miss Clemens would announce the entire assignment was a big joke and they'd start learning about tribal societies in Africa or South America instead. Just as Steve thought to pray for world peace, his traitorous mind pulled up an image of Billy nuzzling his neck.

Nope! Steve's his eyes flew open. The bell rang and the chatter

quieted as Steve glanced around the room, super grateful that Billy sat two seats behind him and didn't come into his immediate view.

"How is everyone today?" Miss Clemens' sing-songy voice did not bode well for this being a practical joke. "Today we are going to start by mingling and getting used to posturing. You should be looking for the people you've been assigned to find. As it's only Tuesday and you have until Friday to complete this task, don't try too hard today and take your time to make sure. You will not be required to declare your partners and groups until Friday. Some of you are mated, some of you are not, but all of you have partners to find. Please follow the instructions in your individual assignments only and don't worry about what everyone else seems to be doing, because some of you are in pairs and some of you are in groups of three since we have an odd number of students."

The room stirred with tension. It made Steve's anxiety rise; a muffled cough, papers being shuffled around, a whisper. It all sounded normal, but nothing felt normal.

"You can speak to each other and posture through conversation, just make sure you do not specify your designation or directly say who you are looking for. I'll be walking around and taking notes if you have any questions. So if everyone will stand up, you have the rest of the class to interact with each other. Have fun!"

Not a single person got to their feet and Steve thought the entire class might be collectively holding their breath.

Miss Clemens laughed. "Come on now, don't be shy! Everyone up. This is going to be more fun than you think, I promise."

Yeah right.

Finally, students started standing so Steve swallowed and got to his feet.

All he had to do was make eye contact and then look down first, signaling that he was an omega. He hoped his alpha found him, because he had no idea how to find his mate this early in the game, even Dustin had been perplexed by that at first. Ultimately though,

the kid had come up with a winning idea for Steve to wait until the Alpha group had been formed and see which one they all submitted to then he'd know who the leader was. But that could take time.

Steve decided to just be an omega and see what happened. He wasn't looking for his partner or group today, so hopefully, they were looking for him. And let's face it, the only people he wanted to interact with were Nancy and Jonathan anyway so he made a path straight for them, careful not to make eye contact with anyone else. He felt relieved when he got to them and they formed a small triangle, blocking out others for their pow wow.

"Hey Steve," Jonathan said, meeting Steve's eyes and seeming equally relieved now that they were all together.

It took Steve a moment before he remembered he was supposed to posture. Right, okay, he could try this with Jonathan first, he trusted the guy. Steve dropped his eyes, waited for a beat and then when he looked up, he noticed Jonathan was *still* looking at him so, okay, either Jonathan didn't know about the eye contact thing or he could be an alpha. Interesting.

Steve darted his eyes at Nancy, suddenly eager to see what she'd do.

"I'm not really sure what we're supposed to do," Nancy said. Her eyes met his, but didn't linger or look down. She was just acting like her usual self. Maybe she wasn't using eye contact to posture or didn't know about it.

"Yeah, I spent hours at Dustin's last night sorting through the instructions," Steve said, deliberately looking down each time he made eye contact with Nancy. She still showed no signs of understanding what he was doing so he sighed and gave up. "He kept going on and on about wolf packs."

"I thought about wolf packs too," Jonathan said.

Steve started feeling more confident in his assessment that Jonathan was an alpha when the same eye contact pattern repeated between them a second time and Steve lowered his eyes, Jonathan did not.

Maybe Jonathan was even *his* alpha. While he couldn't imagine getting neck nuzzled by the guy without both of them laughing, he could definitely handle it. It'd be weird and would likely fuel all the threesome rumors about them even more, but so what, it wasn't the worst rumor floating about that year.

"Incoming," Nancy said, eyes narrowed and trained over Steve's shoulder. Her lips pursed in annoyance.

Whomever she was looking at, Steve *felt* from behind, an invasive presence in his personal space. What the fuck. He turned quickly, backing up to create space and ID the intruder but the direction he chose only opened him up for further advancement. By Billy. And Billy seized the opportunity and immediately closed the distance between them again. Only this time, they were face to face, practically chest to chest. Again, what the fuck.

"Ladies," Billy said.

Steve met his eyes and glared, but then he remembered the damn assignment and considered *not* playing the game right now, because, you know, Billy didn't deserve Steve's submission, but the faster he knew Billy's designation the faster he could get that stupid idea out of his head that he'd be stuck with him as a partner all semester. And possibly nuzzled by him. Christ. Steve willed his mind to stop thinking about Billy's face in his neck.

One thing Billy had always been good at was holding some crazy eye contact, but since that was just his norm, it didn't necessarily mean anything so Steve sucked it up and flashed him a look of disgust then slowly and very deliberately made a big show of lowering his lashes.

It felt unnatural, it felt weird. But strangely, it also felt...electric. Like he was putting his trust in Billy to not to hurt him, which made no sense in real life, but yet, here he was, doing it anyway and feeling oddly okay about it.

"Jerk," Nancy tossed back at Billy. "How sweet of you to come over and submit to us."

Billy shouldered Steve's arm as he stepped past him to back Nancy

into the wall and stare her down. Jonathan immediately stepped between them and got into Billy's face, flaring his nostrils.

Damn, Steve had never seen Jonathan like that, well wait, maybe he had but that was neither here nor there, the real thrill of the moment was that Jonathan was definitely posturing like an alpha. Which meant that Steve's prayers may have been heard after all.

Billy sniffed, forcing his nostrils to flare as well and he switched his attention to Jonathan, crowding him into the wall instead. "You, uh, got something you want to say to me, Byers?" Billy flashed his teeth.

Jonathan did not back down and they held eye contact for a long while before Steve finally cleared his throat. "Chill out, Hargrove, it's just a class."

Not only did Steve regret interrupting the alpha standoff between Billy and Jonathan, because damn it, he hadn't let them finish so he still didn't know which of them was the tougher alpha, but he really regretted it when Billy turned on him and leaned into his face. No, not his face, his neck.

Shit. He had not been expecting that at all. Steve stepped back, not ready for any sort of nuzzling so early in the game, especially not from *him*, because he couldn't let just anyone nuzzle him, right? Only his alpha was allowed such honors. Jesus, he was really getting into the assignment now.

Steve's foot caught on a chair leg and he stumbled over a desk. He threw his arms out to brace his fall, but he never hit the ground, because Billy caught him. Billy fucking *caught* him.

And Steve wished he'd actually fallen to the floor instead because holy shit, that strange electricity he'd been feeling since the assignment was announced flooded the air and *what the fuck was happening* because it *couldn't* be—most definitely *shouldn't* be—that kind of electricity with *this* fucking person, because those were Billy's arms wrapped around him, holding him up and making him feel safe.

Steve scrambled out of Billy's hold and onto his feet, running a hand through his hair over and over again like a mad man. "What the hell,

man?”

Billy shrugged and leaned against one of the desks casually. He shoved his hands in his pockets like he didn't have a care in the world. “Can't help it if you don't understand the assignment, Harrington.”

“We understand it.” Nancy poked a finger into Billy's shoulder, but she didn't move to stand in front of him, staying safely in his peripherals.

“Do you, though?” Billy said, barely turning his head toward her, as if she meant nothing to him. He clearly did not assess her as a potential threat or competition.

Steve felt his blood run cold. Jesus, Billy was acting like the *biggest* fucking alpha ever. Not that he wasn't normally an overconfident prick but this was exaggerated even for him. Fucking hell.

Please let Jonathan be the head alpha, Steve's mind pleaded, but Jonathan seemed content to remain against the wall, saying nothing. Shit. *Come on Jonathan*, Steve stared at his friend's face, hoping to catch his eye and telepathically communicate that his entire semester depended on who took the lead, so no pressure or anything, but, you know, what happens right here, right now kind of matters. A lot. At least to Steve.

But it was Billy who turned his head to Jonathan, locking their eyes together again.

Steve's breath caught in his throat as he watched Jonathan's jaw clench, only to be mirrored by Billy clenching his jaw. And then Jonathan's eyes narrowed and then so did Billy's. Each shift of expression made got mimicked and each second felt like an eternity.

Eventually, one of them would have to break, right? Steve prayed one more time, anything for Billy to be the one that backed down, but then, Jonathan gave a frustrated sigh and lowered his eyes.

Nancy muttered something Steve couldn't hear and crossed her arms over her chest while he reeled at the loss of Jonathan as his possible

partner.

“You got something to say to me, Wheeler?” Billy asked, a bit of glee in his voice.

She shook her head. “No...sir.”

Oh, sweet Jesus. Well, that answered the question if Nancy was an alpha or not. Clearly not. Also, not his partner. But she could be an omega and still be in his group. But damn if Steve wasn't impressed, she had played that well without using hardly any overt body language. She'd submitted to Billy's alpha nature with one perfect word—sir.

“That's what I thought. What about you, Harrington? You got something to say to me?” Billy asked, his blue eyes boring in Steve's.

Steve decided to really amp it, just in case Billy was the head alpha and because their grade depended on doing the assignment correctly. Biting back a scowl, Steve put on the most innocent, doe-like expression he had and met Billy's eyes. But he didn't say anything. Instead, he softly shook his head and lowered his eyes and lashes as shyly as he could. After a long beat, he glanced up and saw Billy licking his lower lip, staring at him.

Jesus. Fucking. Christ.

“Shit.” Nancy said, clearly recognizing what was going on. No one in their right mind would want to see Steve Harrington submitting to Billy Hargrove so soon after that awful beat down.

Billy's mouth slowly turned into smile. “Mmmmm, glad we're all on the same page then.” He pushed off the desk and started to walk away before tossing his head over his shoulder. “Come see me later, Harrington. And don't dawdle, I don't like to wait.”

And then he walked away.

God dammit. He just knew that Billy was going to end up the lead alpha and his fucking partner after all that, but that didn't mean that Billy had figured it out yet. There were four omegas in the class, so at best, Steve hoped Billy had simply identified him as one of them

and was going to vet them all later in order to find his mate. But how would Billy know Steve was his mate?

And then it sunk in. Oh crap. The only way Billy would know is because *Steve* would have to signal *him*. Because while there was a head alpha, who would stand out among the other alphas, there was no head omega that would stand out, they'd all just be the same. So once Billy proved himself to be the clan leader, it would be up to Steve to somehow indicate they were mates. Fuck, partners. *Partners*, not mates.

What the fuck, brain—partners—get it right, Steve thought. But his brain just chirped back, *mates*.

Notes for the Chapter:

Billy is sure getting into the assignment XD

3. Chapter 3

Steve waited until exactly three minutes before the end of class bell rang to approach Billy, who had perched himself on the edge of Miss Clemens' desk at the front of the room like an alpha diva. If he turned out *not* to be the head alpha, Steve would be surprised. And so would the real head alpha.

"Harrington," Billy called out to him way before he got there, drawing attention of nearby students to Steve's walk of shame. Fuck. "Thought you were going to stand me up."

"No." Steve kept his lashes low. "I wouldn't do that."

Billy grinned and snapped his jaw. "Come here, *Steve*."

His name on Billy's lips sent a shiver through Steve's body. What the fuck was happening? This was just a stupid class project. How did this feel real? *Why* did this feel real?

Steve moved closer, stopping right outside Billy's personal space like any normal human being would.

"Why are you so far away, honey? Come closer," Billy said.

Honey!

Oh, hell no. Billy had cooed it too, like all sweet and charming and nope, nuh-uh, no way. This was *not* happening. The worst part was that it even though it sounded so wrong coming out of Billy's mouth, it felt dangerously right. Steve wished he was still at home, asleep in his bed, dreaming up all this crazy bullshit. Because this was some crazy ass reality.

Steve looked up and glared. Not caring that he was breaking the dominance rules, but Billy seemed to like his little act of defiance, because of course he would. Asshole.

"Look at you, still got a little fire in you, don't you?" Billy reached for his arm, his fingers curling around the cuff of Steve's long sleeve shirt. He tugged.

Steve let himself be pulled forward by the sleeve, ever so slowly, until he was nestled between Billy's legs. Billy's *spread* legs. Somehow, this didn't seem like a suitable display of behavior for sociology class anymore. How was this happening at school, in class, as an assignment and in front of their peers? This posturing, no, *flirting*, had to be taking it way too far. They were both guys for fucks sake.

But then.

"Oh! What great posturing! Good job, both of you," Miss Clemens said and jotted something down in her notebook before clutching it back to her chest.

And then, she just stood there and gawked. At them. Like all was well and it was normal for Steve to be fucking standing between Billy Hargrove's spread legs, captured and held in place by one flimsy sleeve while Billy took complete ownership of her desk and Steve's masculinity.

Nothing like having a captive audience when you're a guy submitting to another guy who likes taunting you and calling you honey.

Miss Clemens smiled. "Go on, I didn't mean to interrupt."

If the teacher didn't think that what they were doing was inappropriate then you know what, fuck it. Steve wanted an A in the class and whatever he and Billy were doing seemed to be heading in the right direction so he relaxed into letting Billy lead, because that was the fucking assignment after all. To let Billy lead him. By the sleeve, apparently. Like a skittish schoolgirl.

Steve hadn't even realized he was still looking to Miss Clemens for approval until he felt Billy's fingers (from his free hand) under his chin, gently guiding his face back to his. Steve kept his eyes lowered, noticing the fucking sleeve. Billy was still holding onto it even though he'd stopped tugging and even though Steve was as close as he could get already. And Steve *liked* that Billy was still holding onto it.

"It's okay, you can look," Billy said, his voice hushed now that their

faces were so close. Christ, they were close. And Miss Clemens was watching. Super.

Steve raised his eyes and found the blue in Billy's, surprised that his eyes were calm, relaxed and there was something else that Steve couldn't quite pinpoint. Something soft. Steve's stomach fluttered. Fuck, it felt like Billy was going to kiss him.

"You haven't said anything," Billy said, his voice low and husky.

Steve shrugged and looked away, not because of posturing this time, but because he needed to find his bearings. "What's there to say?"

Billy hummed, but then fell quiet. A beat went by, then two. Steve felt an energy build up between them, a pull, magnetic really, and turned his eyes back to Billy's, seeking to know if the other boy felt it too. He saw beyond what he'd seen in Billy's eyes before, depth, caring, understanding. For all the eye contact they had shared since they met, the aggression, the competition, the dismissal, *this* was something new. Something electric.

The shrill ringing of the bell shattered the spell between them and Steve jumped away from him as fast as he could, heart thundering in his chest as he hurried away. Fuck. He snatched his books off his desk, leaving a trail of *Steve's* behind from Nancy and Jonathan, who had likely witnessed the show he and Billy had given the entire class.

He got down the hall in record time, but he didn't get away from trading out his books in his locker before Nancy's hand landed on his arm. "Steve, are you okay?"

She was alone, thank god. He couldn't face Jonathan just yet, not so soon after publicly becoming Billy's *honey*. Steve shook his head and shut his locker. "How bad was it?"

What he meant was *how bad did it look? Me submitting to Billy Hargrove while he looked like he wanted to kiss me in front of the entire class.*

Nancy pursed her lips the way she did when she was about to tell the truth but would really rather lie to spare someone's feelings. "Hey, it

wasn't that bad, only a few people noticed." Nancy gave him her pity smile.

He was so fucked.

"Christ. What kind of assignment is this anyway?" Steve asked, running a hand through his hair. His legs felt like Jell-O and he couldn't get that electric itch out from under his skin.

"I talked to some people from last semester's class and they didn't have the same project so this is apparently new. Jonathan thinks it's really strange too," Nancy said.

"You're a beta, aren't you," Steve said and Nancy sighed.

"You know I can't say what I am, *but* since no one said we can't guess what everyone else is, it seems obvious that you're an omega and Jonathan and Billy are alphas, but we'll have to wait until Friday to confirm all that, right?" Nancy smiled, a real smile this time.

Steve missed the idea of her sometimes, her friendship was the same, endearing as always, but he missed having someone who cared about him, was there for him and prioritized him as if he mattered.

Having that again with someone felt a million miles away.

"Hey." Nancy touched his arm again gently. "It'll be okay."

"He could end up being my partner though..." Steve said. The worst part was, he didn't hate the idea of Billy being his partner anymore. But that could just be the floaty, euphoric feeling talking, the one that had swallowed him whole while he stood motionless between Billy's legs and gazed into his eyes like a lovesick girl.

"Then you talk to Miss Clemens and explain what happened. She seems reasonable," Nancy said.

Steve shook his head. "No, I'll deal with it if he is. I'm not afraid of him."

Nancy raised her eyebrows.

"I'm not," Steve said.

"Okay, I believe you." Nancy shifted her books in her arms. "Call me tonight, okay?"

"Yeah, I will." Steve wasn't going to call. What was he going to say? *Oh hey, I thought Billy was going to kiss me in front of everyone and I didn't hate the idea of it. I might have let him. How's Holly doing, she still afraid of Big Bird?*

Nancy walked off, heading to her next class. Steve considered ditching the rest of the day, but decided feeling buzzy and light and confused over Billy Hargrove's alluring eyes and magnetic field wasn't a good enough reason. Plus, it was probably just nerves from the insanity of the assignment. Because there was no way Steve *liked* what had happened when Billy tugged him closer and touched his chin gently. And held onto his sleeve.

No way. Nope, definitely not.

Notes for the Chapter:

Ahhh, sweet Steve. And his sleeve. The sleeve thing is what really got him.

He totally wants more sleeve-time now.

"Sleevey Steve"

XD

I'm just rambling now. I should go write.

4. Chapter 4

Billy completely ignored Steve in gym class later that day, a whole two periods after Sociology. Well, fine then. Steve didn't care. They were supposed to act normal outside of the classroom anyway and Billy either ignored Steve or got in his face most days so fine, today had turned into an ignoring day apparently. Whatever.

Most days had been ignoring days since they'd gotten into it and traded punches. And until yesterday, Steve preferred it that way, being ignored, because Billy Hargrove was the last thing he cared about. But today, after the eye contact and the sleeve holding and the electricity...it was just surprising how nonchalant Billy was being. Like, really dude, really?

But wasn't that Billy's bad boy act anyway, the reason all the girls wanted him and couldn't actually lock him down? When he wanted your attention, he got it, but when he was done with you, well, you might as well be invisible.

Still, Steve didn't care. Didn't matter to him. Nope. It was just some dumb assignment and Billy was probably gunning for a good grade in class too, though, he didn't seem like the type to care about his grades really, but he'd heard he was in some pretty advanced classes but again, so what, didn't matter. Steve didn't care. Absolutely not.

They were doing their physical assessment tests for the beginning of the semester. Steve was getting timed on stupid shit, like how many sit-ups he could do in a minute. Billy was across the gym, waiting his turn on the rope climb.

Steve got up from the mat, pleased he was still in shape enough to beat out his old record. Tommy, who had been nearby doing chin-ups, sauntered over and slung an arm around Steve's shoulders. "You gonna let Hargrove carry your books later, *honey*?"

Steve shrugged him off. He didn't hate Tommy. But he didn't like him anymore either.

"You were really getting into the assignment earlier," Tommy said.

He was in Sociology too, along with his girlfriend. Steve hadn't paid them one iota of attention though, couldn't guess their designations if he tried.

"It's just a class. Don't get excited." Steve wiped at the one stray bead of sweat on his forehead.

But everything excited Tommy if he could make a quick joke of it. "Steve...Stevie-O, I'm not the one that got excited. Am I right, Steve *Hunnington!*" Tommy yelled his last name like a fucking buffoon, and slapped Steve's back. But it wasn't his last name. It was *honey* and Harrington merged into one. Steve didn't hate it, actually. But still. Hardy-har-har.

Half the boys looked over, including Billy. Great, Tommy had poked the bear. It wasn't Steve Tommy was making fun of, not really, but Billy's use of the word honey, which clearly did not go unnoticed. Steve stepped away from Tommy and put his hands on his hips in disapproval. Fucking idiot.

Billy's face was blank, probably ready to explode but then, the dickhead smirked. "Awww, is Hunnington having a bad day?" Billy's taunt was even louder than Tommy's had been.

Steve shook his head in disbelief. He should have expected this, really, but he thought something had happened between them. Apparently not. "Why, you wanna make it better, *honey bear?*" Steve hollered back at Billy.

Tommy wailed in laughter, which, why? It wasn't even that funny. Some of the guys *oooooh'd* at Steve's comeback, as if he'd put Billy in his place. Like that could ever happen.

Billy shook his head and scraped his teeth over his bottom lip. "Be careful what you wish for, *Harrington.*"

"Make each other feel better on your own time!" Their gym teacher barked.

Billy flashed him a mean smile then went back to his cronies. Steve sighed. Great. This was so the opposite of how he felt in sociology,

this was normal. And boring. And a bit deflating.

But whatever.

At least he understood this.

~*~

Steve didn't shower after gym class, no one did. It was too cold and the heat just didn't warm the locker rooms well enough for a consistently below freezing January in Hawkins. That and they hadn't done enough to really sweat in class anyway. He pulled his long sleeve shirt over his head, shoving his gym shirt into his locker.

He adjusted his collar and pulled his sleeves into place. He stared down at his sleeve. The little traitor. Making him think things. Feel things. Consider things.

Steve hadn't always been a sentimental bleeding heart, but dating Nancy had corrupted his playboy ways and opened him up to the little things that made life matter. Sentimental was the last thing Steve needed to be about the cuff of his sleeve. The one Billy had touched, held between his fingers and tugged on. It was just a stupid sleeve, nothing more, nothing less.

He slammed his gym locker shut.

You know what? Nope. Steve was taking control back. Fuck this. He wasn't about to let some stupid gesture Billy Hargrove pulled on him in a fucking class reduce him to...to...whatever the hell this was.

He was Steve fucking Harrington first. Omega in sociology class second. And he wouldn't forget that again.

~*~

Steve felt a sense of renewed confidence as he walked through the school parking lot after school. Especially when he saw Billy standing in front of his Camaro, cupping his bare hand around the end of a cigarette to light it. It was twenty-eight degrees today, how did the guy not have gloves on?

“Harrington,” Billy called out to him, sniffing from the cold.

Steve changed directions and approached Billy head on. “What do you want, Hargrove?” He was not afraid of him or his sweet, googly eyes.

Billy’s shoulders were up near his chin, trying to keep warm. Their eyes met and this time, Billy looked down. Huh. Weird. They weren’t in class so they weren’t posturing, but still. Strange.

Billy kicked at the curb, inhaled on his smoke and then sniffed again before finally looking up at Steve. “Max told me, about that night.”

Fear crept up Steve’s neck. Shit, she better not have told him about the Upside Down. “Yeah, and...what about it?”

“That you were asked to watch them, because the little Byers kid was sick and that’s why she snuck out. That she asked you to lie to me so she could stay, said everyone was really worried that night, that he might not make it and she didn’t want to leave, you know, in case...it was the last time she got to see him,” Billy said, taking another drag. He looked so cold.

Steve had no idea what story Max had told him, or why Billy might be sympathetic to it, but he’d go along with it for now. “It was a rough night. For everyone.”

“I’m not apologizing. I’m just saying, I get it now,” Billy said. Of course, the dickhead wasn’t apologizing.

Steve’s nose was starting to run. He wiped at it with his coat sleeve (not his precious shirt sleeve). “Yeah, whatever man. I don’t need an apology. But if you ever touch one of the kids again, I’ll fucking take you down, you hear me?”

Billy's blinked, clearly as surprised by the threat as Steve was, because hell, Steve didn't even know he had that kind of threat in him. He definitely couldn't take Billy down with his hands just to save himself, but next time, he'd fight dirty if it meant protecting the kids.

Billy scoffed. "I can't peg you. One day you're this meek mother fucker toting his bitch girlfriend around and then you're Mary fucking Poppins to a bunch of kids, can't plant your feet for shit and then, you take a swing at me knowing I'll kick your ass and then today..." He trailed off, looking down again.

"What? What about today?" Steve asked.

"Nothing, forget it," Billy said, huffing and reaching for his car door. At least he'd been smart enough to start his car and blast the heat when he first got out so it'd warm up the engine. Billy got in his car and shut the door, but he was still looking at Steve through the windshield.

Steve envied the heat, but at least he had a pair of leather gloves and a scarf on that matched his coat. He stood there, freezing his ass off and scowling at the *boy* who had made him feel something again, hating that it was him of all people. Why Billy?

Billy looked away first and must have started fiddling with his radio because suddenly the Camaro flared to life with the screech of Twisted Sister. Steve rolled his eyes and headed to his car.

Fuck Billy and his lack of basic winter gear and his lame attempt at an apology, because let's face it, that was an apology. And fuck his pretty blue eyes.

Christ. It was back, *that* feeling. The sleeve feeling.

~*~

"Have you been nuzzled yet?" Those were the first words out of

Dustin's mouth when he got in Steve's car.

"No, dipshit. Shut the door, you're letting the heat out," Steve said.

"Alright, alright. Jeez." Dustin climbed into the passenger seat, shut the door and turned toward Steve. "Did you at least find out who your partner is yet?"

"Seatbelt." Steve was already driving, but like, could the kid not be in danger on his watch again please. "And no, not yet. But..."

"What, what? Steve, tell me, you know I've been waiting all day to find out. I could barely eat my lunch. I mean, I did eat it, all of it, but barely."

"Seatbelt." Steve reminded.

Dustin reached around and put his seatbelt on. "Okay *now* will you tell me? You're worse than my mom."

"I think Jonathan is an alpha, but...not my partner. He submitted to another alpha so he's not the leader," Steve said.

"And Nancy?"

"Beta. I think. Maybe an omega," Steve said.

"Excellent, this is good data. Okay so I estimated how many of each group there can be," Dustin said, pulling a piece of wrinkled paper out of his overstuffed bookbag. Like, what in the hell did that kid have in there? It looked big enough for two sets of high school books. Dustin smoothed the paper out. "Remember how it said there are more betas than alphas and omegas combined?"

"Yeah..."

"So if there are twenty-one students in the class and four omegas then that means the max number of alphas would be six. Because four and six is ten. And eleven betas. Makes twenty-one."

"Yeah, yeah, I can count, okay so, I've identified two alphas already, Jonathan and...that other one," Steve said, clearing his throat.

“Right, so at most, you should only be on the lookout for four more, but maybe less. It could just be two alphas though so keep that in mind too.”

“When did you figure all of this out?” Steve asked.

Dustin smiled. “During fifth period math.”

“Thanks for doing my homework when you should have been doing your own work, but thanks. That is helpful actually.”

“You need a list to keep track of your findings.” Dustin rooted through his backpack again and pulled out a pencil. He started writing on the paper he had out. “Okay, so there are four omegas...”

Steve glanced again and saw that Dustin was drawing columns and writing out numbers under them.

“And two to six alphas...Jonathan and...who’d you say the other one was?” Dustin asked.

“Uh...Billy.”

Dustin’s pencil stopped on the “h” of writing Jonathan’s name. “Ummmm, and you conveniently left that piece of information out because...”

“I knew what you’d say.”

“That he’s the world’s biggest asshole?” Dustin said.

Steve took a deep breath. “Yeah no...not that.”

Dustin’s eyebrows creased together as he thought. “I got nothing here, Steve, you’re just going to have to tell....oh my shit! If he turns out to be your partner then...”

Steve waited for it. The inevitable realization. Dustin’s *favorite* thing about this whole project.

“He’ll be the one that nuzzles you! Steve! Steve!”

“Stop screaming my name. Jesus. I know, okay, I already thought of that. And almost threw up.” That was a lie. Huge lie. Maybe the biggest lie ever.

“Billy might nuzzle you!” And then Dustin started laughing. Little twerp. “Now *that* I have to see. I want a photo actually.”

“Nope,” Steve said, remembering how he had dropped Jonathan’s camera when he found out he’d been spying. Imagine what Billy would do if someone took a photo of his face in Steve’s neck. Not that anyone would have the balls to take a picture like that anyway. Except maybe Tommy. But that’d just be for blackmail purposes.

Dustin finally stopped laughing. “Dude, though, for real. I just imagined it. It’s forever burned into my mind. Gross!”

This time, Steve was the one that laughed. “Yeah, well, serves you right. Maybe it’s a sign that you should stop thinking about nuzzling so much. Uh, do you have any Oreos left?”

“Why? You want to come over again?” Dustin perked up. Always the eager one.

Steve feigned disinterest. “No, just...maybe for a few minutes. Your outline really helped and your list idea...”

“Yeah, of course. But...I ate the rest of the Oreos after you left.” Dustin had the wherewithal to look sheepish. There was like half a pack of cookies still when Steve had left. “I have Cheez Balls though...the name brand ones, not the cheap knockoffs.”

“Cheez Balls you say...” Steve pressed his lips together, rubbed his chin and hummed, pretending like he was contemplating the offer. Hell, he’d come in if Dustin offered him a glass of water at this point. He pointed at his young friend and smiled. “Deal.”

Dustin beamed. Steve liked it when they hung out, just the two of them, he knew Dustin liked it too. Just because Dustin was the only person Steve was regularly hanging out with these days didn’t mean he was lonely. He wasn’t lonely. He just...was used to being around people more, that’s all.

Maybe that's why he felt so connected to Billy today—the sheer physical proximity and undivided attention when they interacted. Yeah, maybe *that* explained what Steve felt earlier, was still feeling, and that was consistently growing in intensity. But again, whatever, that was neither here, nor there.

At least this was a viable explanation. One that made sense. Because the other explanation, that Steve *liked* Billy, well that just made no sense. Nope. No sense at all.

Because Billy was a jerk. A Neanderthal. A bully.

But more importantly, Billy was a boy.

And Steve felt that should bother him more than it did, because, oddly enough, it didn't bother him at all. It *should* bother him that he felt this way about a boy. But yet, it didn't deter him at all. In fact, he kind of liked it way more than he should. And *that's* what really bothered him.

That he liked feeling this way. About Billy.

Notes for the Chapter:

Oh our sweet Steve and his flimsy little ideas about controlling his feelings. As. If.

And the sleeve! **♪ always something there to remind me ♪**

Next chapter is posturing in class again.

5. Chapter 5

Miss Clemens spoke for the first ten minutes of class on Wednesday, reviewing the posturing she'd seen from the students the day before. Eye contact was at the top of her list as one of the most effective ways to determine rank and designation. Steve would have to thank Dustin later for that sage advice. The kid was smarter than he looked.

While eye contact was good for determining designation, it wasn't as effective for finding mates and partners so today's class was to be spent posturing as being either single or taken. Mated students would have to behave as though they were already spoken for while unmated students were free to behave as though they were still on the market.

Steve loathed this idea. He knew how to act single and taken, he'd been both in recent years, but he felt like the unmated students would have more fun while he would just sit in the corner and *not* flirt with anyone.

Unless he could flirt with his mate, but since he didn't know who that was yet, it was non-flirty Steve until further notice. Which *bor-ing!* Especially after he and Billy had gotten their flirt on the day before that had felt the complete opposite of boring. It had been exhilarating. Heart-pounding. Memory making.

Steve had beaten Billy to class, per usual. But this time, Billy had *not* walked close to Steve as he moved down the aisle to his seat. Nor had he acknowledged Steve at all.

It shouldn't have bothered Steve as much as it did. But it did.

But Steve really felt the punch of rejection when they were free to get up and Billy turned his back to him and sidled up to Donna, a pretty blonde in the class that Steve had had his eye on Freshman year, but never asked out. She was sweet and proper, exactly like Sandy from Grease, before she turned into a badass wrapped in black leather. He'd heard Donna was saving herself for marriage. But that's not why he hadn't asked her out, he just hadn't. And then it didn't

matter because he dated a bunch of other girls and then Nancy and now, Donna was just one of those Senior girls that remained pure and untouched and very, very unattainable.

Steve didn't realize he was still sitting in his seat and staring at them until someone sat on his desk above him.

"How are you today, Steve?" It was Keith Tanner, a Junior on the football team. He'd been polite enough to move Steve's notebook aside before planting his ass down.

Steve glanced up at him, feeling crowded though there was plenty of space between them. Keith was just hovering because he was on higher ground. "I'm good..." Steve said, remembering to lower his eyes. He did and then raised them slowly, finding Keith was still looking at him. Maybe an alpha, okay, noted.

Steve ignored the twang of panic in his heart. The more alphas there were, the less likely Billy would be his partner. As if that even mattered. Who cared? Not Steve. Only Steve. Same thing. Whatever.

"How are you?" Steve asked when Keith just sat there, looking at him.

Keith was a decent looking guy, rather popular, but they'd never been close friends, even ran in different circles because they played different sports. Keith was the type to always date the cheerleaders and only hang out with the other guys on the football team.

"I'm swell, but tell me more about how you are," Keith said.

"Uh..." Steve had spoken to Keith many times over the years and this was the most stilted conversation he'd ever had with the guy, but maybe that was the point. Maybe this is how he was distinguishing his role or something. Steve offered a fake smile and considered his words carefully. He was supposed to act *taken* after all. "I'm... lonely. I mean...not lonely, I'm bored actually."

Keith didn't look like he was enjoying the assignment at all, but he nodded as if he understood. "Not lonely, but bored. Hmmm, well, if

you're bored then would you like to spend time with me...maybe?"

Steve blinked. Had Keith just fake asked him out? Steve opened his mouth then shut it. Nancy had implied it was pretty obvious to anyone paying attention that Steve presented as an omega yesterday. Keith was acting like an alpha and asking him on a fake date, kind of, maybe, so that meant Keith could be trying to determine Steve's mated status.

This was so much harder with Keith than it had been with Billy. Interacting with Billy had been visceral, intuitive, magnetic, easy to know who was leading and who was being led. So far interacting with Keith was like a forced playdate between kids who had never met but their moms were friends and wanted to get together and drink wine.

Steve had to decline. Even if Keith turned out to be his partner in the end, he had to signal that he wasn't available to make it clear he was mated. Right? Wait, maybe he hadn't thought this through. This was harder than he had anticipated.

"Harrington!" Steve flinched in surprise as Billy's voice boomed out across the room.

Steve whipped around in his chair to glare at Billy, who was still leaning into Donna. Seriously, what the fuck. It made Steve sick to see them like that, but at least she wasn't standing between Billy's legs. "What?" Steve barked back.

Billy pointed at the floor by his feet. "Come here."

Keith got up from Steve's desk. "I'm talking to Steve right now, mind your own business, Hargrove."

A hush fell over the entire class as everyone turned to watch, even Miss Clemens with her pen poised over her notebook. Steve tried to stand up, but Keith gently put a hand on his shoulder to keep him down. "I'll take care of this," Keith said, looking down at him with a soft smile.

Oh my god. Was this how girls felt? Steve could barely process what

was happening.

Billy snorted and sauntered forward. Keith stepped toward him as well. "I think there's been a misunderstanding here, Tanner. You see, if you want to talk to Steve, you have to ask me first."

Steve could only see Keith from the back now, but he could tell the guy was not having any of what Billy was saying.

"And why is that?" Keith asked.

Steve could see Billy's face and preened when Billy averted his eyes from Keith's to glance at him. It felt like acknowledgment. But was that a sign of Billy submitting to Keith? Steve didn't know.

Billy's eyes shifted back to Keith and he smiled, one of those awful smiles of his that indicated he was getting ready to lay someone out, which maybe he was figuratively, not physically of course. It was a standoff between the two alphas to see who was ranked higher after all. While Steve had practically begged for Jonathan to outrank Billy yesterday, anything to not be paired up with him, today was a much different story.

Keith was nice, but boring, while Billy was anything but boring. Please God, have Billy win this match. What a difference one day makes.

"Because I said so." Billy stepped forward again, closing in on Keith.

"Unless you have a real reason then I suggest you go back to whatever it was you were doing and let Steve decide if he wants to talk to me or not," Keith said.

Steve felt his cheeks burning. Shit. He did not want to be the one to make that decision.

Billy sighed. "Tanner, Tanner, Tanner. Seems you don't know that Steve's decisions are really my decisions."

"You don't own him. He's not yours," Keith said.

"But he might be and until all the partners are sniffed out and locked

into place, he falls under my protection,” Billy said. “Comprende?”

“Donna too?” Keith asked, pointing at her. “Are you going to hog everybody?”

Billy looked back at her, with her perfectly styled blonde hair and her big green eyes, all wide and innocent. Steve held his breath. He hated the idea of Billy claiming Donna in the same way.

The room was quiet as Billy seemed to contemplate his next move. “You can talk to Harrington for now, but next time, ask *me* first.” Billy’s eyes met Steve’s, a flash of something flickered between them, something knowing, something *real*.

Billy turned his back to Keith and resumed his spot next to Donna, who bit her lower lip, but looked to Steve instead, clearly confused and lost. She shrugged her hands, palms up as if to say *I have no idea what just happened* and Steve returned the gesture, hyper aware that Billy was ogling her again.

Billy hadn’t claimed Donna publicly like he had claimed Steve. That had to mean something right? Maybe Billy had figured out Steve was his partner. But how? Steve wasn’t even sure yet.

“Sorry about that, are you okay?” Keith asked, sitting down on the desk again. He smiled, but it didn’t reach his eyes. This was all fake to him.

“Yeah, yeah, I’m fine. That was...weird.” Steve fidgeted with the edge of his notebook, willing himself *not* to turn back and see what Billy and Donna were doing.

Keith put his hand on top of Steve’s. For comfort. But it felt really fucking weird. Like, heebie-jeebies weird. Steve slid his hand out from under Keith’s.

“I’m...I appreciate you asking about us...uh...spending time together but...” Steve still had to reject the offer, pretend he was taken.

“But you can’t, right?” Keith asked, looking relieved.

“Right. I can’t.”

“Good. I just had to make sure, you know. I, uh...can’t either actually, but until I find my partner...” Keith said and Steve realized, *oh, he’s also mated to someone.*

But wait. Billy and Keith hadn’t really had a showdown. It was unclear who was the leader. Billy acted like the leader, but Keith hadn’t fully submitted to him, had he? Steve hadn’t been able to see Keith’s eyes. Maybe he had submitted. Shit, he needed to pay better attention.

“I’ll...come by tomorrow and say hi,” Keith said, standing up. This time, his smile did reach his eyes.

Steve nodded as Keith walked away and glanced around before pulling out his list, the one Dustin had helped him make the night before. He added Keith’s name to the number three alpha slot. He wrote *mated* after his name and then wrote Donna’s name in the number two omega slot and added a question mark next to it then quickly hid the list back in his notebook.

He doubted Billy would be hanging around Donna for that long unless she was an omega.

Steve slid out of his seat and looked around. Billy was still charming Donna in the back of the classroom, fucker. Nancy was talking to several students near the front of the room and Jonathan was by the windows talking to a guy. Steve decided to visit Nancy first. He hoped she had already flushed out the designation of some of the people she was talking to so Steve could start adding more names to his list.

But before Steve got to her, Tommy stepped in front of him, with Carol in tow, of course. “Stevie-O, whatcha up to?” Tommy asked, playfully blocking the aisle.

Carol pushed past Tommy and hugged Steve. Steve wasn’t sure what to do with his hands so he half-assed hugged her back. He had hugged her before, probably, couldn’t recall *when* exactly off the top of his head, shit maybe he hadn’t. But this was like...not normal behavior between him and Carol at all.

Unless she was posturing. Wait, who would hug an omega? Another omega maybe.

Steve met her eyes when she pulled back, dropped his eyes, and when he glanced up, her eyes were still down. Jesus, maybe she really was an omega. Steve hugged her again, laughing a bit in happiness. Not that he and Carol had ever been tight, but they were old friends, he knew her and she was easy to be around. It was always the Tommy component that spoiled the pair.

“Hey, hey, mitts off my girl,” Tommy said, but he was grinning. “My real girl, I mean, we’re not partners.”

Carol smacked Tommy’s arm. “Be quiet. We’re not supposed to talk about it like that.”

Steve eyeballed Miss Clemens. She was far enough away and focusing on Jonathan’s group that she wouldn’t have heard them. But Carol was right. Tommy was always looking for shortcuts. He wouldn’t put it past them to have just read over each other’s assignments even though it was against the rules.

“What? This class sucks,” Tommy said. “Why am I a beta? It’s so stupid.”

Steve’s head jerked to locate Miss Clemens again, thankful she was in the same place and jotting something down, distracted. “Man, don’t,” Steve said.

Tommy sighed dramatically. Carol hit his arm again. “Seriously, shut up,” she whispered to her boyfriend. “I’m not getting in trouble because of you.”

“Uh, Carol...maybe on Friday, we can... hang out in class, maybe... sit together?” Steve said, hoping that what he was saying was allowed and didn’t accidentally imply he was unmated.

Carol smiled. “Perfect. Let’s make it a little party, I’ll invite Donna and Janet too. You know, just the four of us.”

An omega party. Steve felt a deep sense of relief wash over him. If Donna and Janet were the other omegas then that part of the

identification was complete and Steve could relax about finding them. Though he would have to watch Janet a bit to make sure she was an omega too, but he guessed Carol had ferreted her out already.

“You’re lucky there’s only four of you, there’s twelve of us,” Tommy said and Carol grabbed his arm and twisted it. “Ow, what the hell?”

“Stop talking so loud,” Carol said, fire shooting from her eyes.

Twelve betas, huh. That certainly helped. That meant there were— Steve did a quick calculation in his head—five alphas. And he’d ID’d three so far; Billy, Jonathan and Keith.

Steve deflated a bit. There were two more rogue alphas out there, either of which could be his mate. Hell, Keith could still be his mate. Steve couldn’t completely rule him out yet.

“Oh and Steve,” Carol said, tugging Tommy away. “You might want to say hi to Kristy.”

Steve furrowed his eyebrows at her. “Um, sure. Okay.” He watched them head toward the back of the classroom, toward Billy’s territory. Yesterday Billy had claimed Miss Clemens’ desk, commandeering the front of the room. Today he had the entire back half under his thumb. Several students lingered near him, including Donna, who he was still parked next to.

Steve wasn’t jealous. He wasn’t. Just because it felt *exactly* like jealousy, didn’t mean it *was* jealousy.

Kristy though? Steve scanned the room for her. He didn’t really know her. She was a quiet, studious girl with glasses. He’d gone to school with her since the second grade but like, had barely ever spoken to her. Why had Carol suggested her of all people?

He saw her talking to another girl in the corner by the door, in the front of the room thank god. Near Nancy’s little group. Carol might be in love with a total dumbass, but he trusted her, so Steve went straight for Kristy, opting to talk to Nancy later.

When Steve approached, Kristy sent the girl she’d been talking to

away. Like, with a command. Oh, maybe she was an alpha.

“Steve, hi!” Kristy smiled, but she seemed nervous. He’d always been popular, her not so much. He’d heard a rumor that she’d had a crush on him in seventh grade. And in eighth. “Wow, you came to me! I was just about to come say hi to you, what a *coincidence*.”

“Oh, uh, great minds think alike,” Steve said, chuckling but feeling like an idiot. Her excited nervousness rattled him a bit, made him uneasy.

“That they do! I think this project is so fascinating. I was up late last night practicing,” she said, meeting his eyes. Steve immediately looked down then glanced up. She held his gaze. It seemed she had never looked down, which truth be told, was probably really hard for her since she naturally looked down whenever she walked through the halls.

“Practicing is a good idea, I hadn’t thought of that,” Steve said, but really, he didn’t think he needed it. “What sort of things did you practice?”

Kristy’s eyes darted around and then she motioned for Steve to come closer to hear her. She whispered. “Honestly, I’m afraid of posturing with Billy. I’m staying as far away from him as I can.”

Steve noticed the left lens of her glasses was smudged at the bottom. “He can be...intense,” Steve said.

“What if he flirts with me,” Kristy said, her voice still hushed. “Or worse, what if he doesn’t? If he speaks to me like he spoke to Keith, in front of everyone, I will cry.”

“Hey, hey, you’ll do fine. Look, if you have to submit to him then maybe do it quickly, get it over with. But if you don’t have to submit to him...if you have to get him to submit to you then...” Steve didn’t know what to tell her, because there was no world in which Billy Hargrove would submit to shy little Kristy Thompson, class assignment or not.

“Just get it over with...I hadn’t thought of that,” Kristy said, leaning

back. "Great idea Steve!" And with that, Kristy walked off, heading straight for Billy.

"Uh...okay, bye..." Steve said out loud to himself after she was long gone. He watched her though, watched her tap Billy on the shoulder, interrupt his conversation with Donna (*still* with Donna, fucker) and then she must have said something to Billy because he smiled, nodded and shook the hand she extended.

Billy's eyes lifted over Kristy's shoulder, meeting Steve's from across the room.

They held eye contact at a distance for a long moment before Steve realized, shit, he had to be the one to look away first. But he didn't look down this time, he let his eyes shift to Donna, who was leaning away from Billy, arms across her chest, making herself small. She didn't seem to want Billy's attention anymore, her body language making that clear.

Something about that pleased Steve, even though his real self wanted to step in and tell Billy to back off, that he was making her uncomfortable. But maybe Donna was just posturing and this was just a class, maybe she was just acting, like he and Billy were and everyone else for that matter and *why* was Steve so unbelievably invested in every little thing now? It was a class assignment for Christ's sake. Not a house party on the weekend.

"Steve!" Nancy waved him over.

Thank god. Because if he kept staring at Donna, no, now staring at Billy again, who was staring back at him like their eyes were caught together in a tractor beam, god dammit, then he'd never get anything done.

Turned out that Nancy was congregating with a bunch of betas. It was easy to figure out due to the way she introduced Steve to all of them, like he hadn't known them his whole life. Nancy liked posturing with words, she was good at it, and it made Steve's life so much easier. He made a mental note of each person to jot down on his list later.

The more data he had, the faster he could figure out who the last alpha was through process of elimination.

And once he knew who that alpha was, then he could determine if Billy was the leader or not, because so far, Jonathan and Kristy had submitted to him. Keith hadn't won that stand-off, but he hadn't lost in a big way either, or had he? Shit, Steve wasn't sure, so for now, he was on the iffy list, but most likely not the leader because Billy had led that conversation and Keith had let him.

Steve spent the rest of class with Nancy and her betas friends. He didn't have to posture so much with them and it turned into much needed social time with people his own age, something Steve had been lacking in recent months. It felt nice to chat and be with his peers again, even for a little while.

When the bell rang, Steve went against the flow of students leaving the room to grab his books from his desk. He looked for Billy, like a fool. But Billy wasn't looking for him.

He had Donna's books in his arms and Donna by his side.

Well, fuck.

Notes for the Chapter:

I've spoiled you all with quick updates, forgive my indulgence!

The sleeve demanded it. And I'm a sucker for the sleeve.

I'm busy the next few days but most of the next chapter is done... in my absence I'll leave you all with this little preview:

{PREVIEW of Chapter 6}

Steve bounced back, pushing at Billy, trying to dislodge him. But the guy just *stuck* to him. Tommy tried to pass Steve the ball, but passed it to another guy when he saw Billy's arms flailing around Steve's torso like an octopus.

Billy wasn't even supposed to be guarding Steve, he had traded out with someone else, made the guy switch with a hard shove to his shoulder and a brash, "go over there, dipshit."

It had pleased Steve to no end, but he wasn't about to let Billy know that.

6. Chapter 6

Notes for the Chapter:

Steve and Billy wrote this chapter, I was just along for the ride.

Steve expected to be ignored in gym class again, but Billy shifted as often as the tide and he had already flipped since walking out of sociology class with Donna two hours before.

Billy was on him. Like white on rice. “You’re playing like shit again, Harrington.”

“Yeah, and?” Steve rolled his eyes and pushed Billy back. They were playing basketball today. No guy had ever ground up against him in any sport like Billy did, *all the time*. Billy moved into Steve’s space again, way too much of their bodies pressed up together to be considered normal, neither of them even had the ball for Christ’s sake.

“I know you can play better, so what’s your deal?” Billy asked, his bare chest all over Steve’s back. Like, what the fuck.

Steve bounced back, pushing at Billy again, trying to dislodge him. But the guy just *stuck* to him. Tommy tried to pass Steve the ball, but passed it to another guy when he saw Billy’s arms flailing around Steve’s torso like an octopus.

Billy wasn’t even supposed to be guarding Steve, he had traded out with someone else, made the guy switch with a hard shove to his shoulder and a brash, “go over there, dipshit.”

It had pleased Steve to no end, but he wasn’t about to let Billy know that.

“Did you hear me?” Billy huffed into his goddamn ear.

Steve shoved back, finally knocking Billy loose. He turned on him. “Just because you speak, doesn’t mean I have to reply. This isn’t sociology class.”

Billy hesitated, clearly perplexed by Steve's dominance outside of the assignment. But hadn't that always been Billy's big hang up? That he wanted to challenge Steve but Steve couldn't even be bothered. And truth be told, Steve felt like kicking his ass right now, putting him in his place. Because of what he'd done in class, with Keith. And Donna.

"Yeah, well, maybe you're less of an ass in sociology." Billy found his confidence and crowded him, chest to chest. Steve thanked his lucky stars that at least one of them was wearing a damn shirt, but this wasn't *that* kind of moment anyway, this was straight up confrontational.

"Hargrove! Harrington!" The teacher yelled then blew the whistle. "Sit out until you get your priorities straight."

They stared each other down, neither giving an inch to the other.

The whistle blew again. "Now! Or it's laps."

Steve disengaged first, not because of Billy, but because the teacher never fucked around about laps. Billy was hot on his heels as they left the court, still much too close. It was infuriating. One moment Steve was being full on ignored by him and the next he couldn't shake the damn guy. He was like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

Steve propped his foot against the wall when he leaned against it and crossed his arms over his chest. Billy was going to have to work for it if he was going to make up for all his bullshit. Clearly, the guy couldn't take a hint, because he slid up along the wall next to him and when he propped his own leg to mirror Steve, his balance shifted and their arms bumped together. And stayed together. *He's literally stuck to me*, Steve thought, both pleased and annoyed. Mostly annoyed. But beyond pleased.

They stood there for several minutes, watching their classmates play basketball. Steve expected a flurry of stupidity out of Billy's mouth, but nothing came. Just silence.

Steve refused to look at him, but could see Billy glancing at him out of the corner of his eye. "What's *your* deal?" Steve finally asked,

throwing the question back at him.

Billy's weight shifted, his arm leaving Steve's for a second before bumping into it again with even more pressure this time. "Doubt you want to know," Billy said.

Steve spared him a look then found he couldn't look away. Shit. Their fucking eye contact really had him hooked. Billy's eyes were worse than any fucking drug people got addicted to. "You're right, I probably don't. But it's pretty obvious you want something so what do you want, Billy?"

"I need a good grade in sociology, alright. Christ, you're annoying," Billy said, back to his harsh tone and empty taunts.

"Why, you failing the eleventh grade?" Steve snorted.

Billy pushed off the wall and got in front of Steve, jamming his finger into his chest. "No, dickhead. I have a 4.0 and I want to keep it that way. I might even beat out your little Nancy-pants for valedictorian next year."

Steve felt like an idiot. Not an idiot for not knowing but like, a straight up idiot because clearly Billy was smarter than him. And maybe even Nancy. Shit. Just one more thing about Billy to add to the fire of craziness in Steve's mind. Like, who the fuck was this guy that blocked in basketball like they were grinding on a dance floor and aced high school without having ever been seen cracking open a damn textbook?

"Whatever, good for you. I want an A in the class too so..." Steve said, because what else could he say. He couldn't rag on the guy for being smart. And he wasn't going to point out his full body contact issues because, fuck it, he didn't need a black eye and let's face it, he didn't want it to stop.

"Good, then we're on the same page." Billy's finger dropped away from his chest and Steve missed it. Missed it bad. "It's obvious, you know..."

"Oh yeah, and what's that?" Steve was still annoyed. Or pretending

to be. Same thing.

“That we’re partners...” Billy said and Steve felt his heart leap up into his throat. Billy leaned into him, bringing their faces close. “In fact, I know we are.”

“Yeah...” Steve stilled, letting Billy linger, basking in the heat he felt coming from the other boy’s body. “Then tell me, how do you *know* for sure?”

Billy did not lean back. “Can’t tell you that.”

“So what, you want me to just believe you?” Steve raised a hand and pressed two fingers to Billy’s shoulder, gently pushing him back. Not because he wanted space, fuck no, he didn’t, but because they were in gym class and leaning up against the wall together and probably looked like horny teenagers making out and well, Steve had been pinned down by Billy enough in the last two days, verbally and physically, to last him a lifetime of dumb comments from the peanut gallery. That and Billy had stopped touching him and Steve was *not* okay with that. So he did it, he touched Billy instead.

Billy looked at Steve’s fingers on his shoulder. “Yeah. I want you to believe me. If we’re going to get an A, you have to trust me. That’s the point of the assignment.”

Steve scoffed. “Oh, I get it. That’s why you apologized yesterday. You need me to trust you, be your friend, make sure I don’t fuck up and screw all your plans with something as devastating as a B. What, you want to come over to my house too, paint each other’s nails and gossip about who fucked who at last week’s party?” Now that was something Billy would have said, but fuck him, Steve could play the tough asshole if he wanted to and he wanted to. Because fuck Billy and his *I need a good grade* bullshit.

Steve hadn’t felt this angry in a long time. He wasn’t sure where it was coming from but no. Hell fucking no. He was not going to be bossed around by Billy outside of sociology class. But in sociology, well, that was a different story. If he had to let Billy take the lead to get an A, fine, whatever, he could deal with that. But outside of class, no fucking way. Steve was still King no matter what anyone

thought, especially Billy.

“Sure, yeah, I can come over,” Billy said, his face open and soft, an odd sight after Steve’s rant. “Today even.”

He hadn’t *really* invited him over. But now that it was an option well, *hell yes*. If what Billy said was true and they were indeed partners then they needed to work together. Not like they needed to do it tonight, they barely even had homework for sociology this week, but if Billy wanted to come over then Steve wasn’t going to point that out and spoil the opportunity.

“Uh, yeah...after school is fine...or whenever.” Steve’s anger evaporated as that other feeling took over. There’d be no junk food after school with Dustin today. Instead, he’d be with Billy. At Steve’s house.

Billy stepped back. “I have to drop Max off then I’ll be over.”

Steve nodded and looked out over the basketball game, realizing he’d totally been in a bubble with Billy. Again. It was becoming all too common to lose track of his surroundings when Billy was in front of him.

“You going to tell me where you live or you hoping your address will just float into my mind through osmosis?” Billy asked.

Christ, Steve had this itch he just couldn’t scratch. Billy was that itch. In the past, Steve would feel the itch and knew he needed to get laid, but like, that couldn’t be the same itch. How would they even... I mean, he knew *how* two guys got it on, but like *who* would...nope. Not going there. Not when Billy was coming over to his house later, because there was no way that Billy Hargrove was also thinking about what had just been knocking around in Steve’s mind.

Jesus, thank god that osmosis thing didn’t really work, otherwise Billy would be seeing some pretty vivid images of being on his knees, mouth full, with Steve’s hand wrapped into his blond hair right about now.

“So we’re going with osmosis then,” Billy said and Steve felt his face

flame. Oh, that's right, Billy needed his address. Right. He'd zoned out there for a hot second. Like, a really hot second.

Steve gave him directions, not his address, figured it be easier with landmarks and a simple *third house on the right with the BMW in the driveway*. The whistle blew, indicating it was time to hit the showers, because they'd definitely need showers after running up and down the court all period. Billy smirked at him then walked off, leaving Steve behind. Billy could shower first, Steve would just wait him out or wait until he got home, because there was no way he was getting wet and naked in front of Billy right now.

~*~

Steve ended up showering at home. He'd dropped Dustin off in record time, no long goodbyes just a *see you tomorrow kid, gotta go* and a mad dash to dowse himself in the steam of his bathroom before Billy showed up. He was in and out, water, soap, shampoo, a smidge of conditioner, not too much, just enough for his ends then an entirely new outfit because gross, he wasn't putting on the clothes he sweat in after gym class. He did not have time to jerk off, not that he needed to, he didn't, not really, maybe a little, but it wasn't that big of a deal, he'd take care of any tension he had before bed. Like pretty much every other night, it *wasn't* related to Billy, more like related to his age. Eighteen. He was at his sexual peak after all.

His hair was still wet when he heard a knock at the front door. Of course, Billy couldn't be bothered with the doorbell. It wasn't like that was its entire life's purpose or anything, to be rung by people at the door.

Ding-dong.

Oh. Well, Steve had to take all that back, he supposed.

"Coming!" Steve yelled when there was more knocking. Jesus.

Billy looked even colder on Steve's front step than he had the day

before in the school parking lot. He really needed a scarf or something if he was going to survive the winter.

“Fuck you’re slow,” Billy hustled past Steve, easing into the heat of the house.

Steve shut the door while Billy rubbed his bare hands together. He had a backpack over his shoulder.

“And you need to invest in a pair of gloves.” Steve grabbed the strap of Billy’s backpack and tugged him into the kitchen, aware of how easy it was to lead him. He only let go of it when he flipped on the water in the sink.

“Your welcoming skills need work,” Billy said as they watched the water run from the faucet. It took a long minute.

Steve ran his finger through the stream, adjusting the handle for more hot water when it wasn’t warm enough yet. “My mom taught me this when I was little,” Steve said.

Billy side-eyed him and frowned. “Is this some weird ass passive-aggressive bullshit? If you want me to wash my hands before touching your precious things, just fucking ask.”

Steve rolled his eyes and grabbed one of Billy’s hands and put it under the stream when the water was finally hot. Steve might have let his hand linger before pulling it back. Billy’s shoulders definitely relaxed and his face fell into that soft, open expression again, like the one he’d had when Steve had inadvertently asked him over. Soon, Billy had both hands in the liquid heat. Steve grabbed a clean dishtowel to dry his hand, greatly enjoying the look of relief on Billy’s face.

“Hot water will thaw your hands really fast, but don’t do it too often or it’ll dry your skin out and then you’ll need lotion and just...guys our age buying lotion always looks a little...you know.” Steve held the dishtowel out for Billy.

Billy took it and wiped his hands. “Huh. It worked. Thanks.”

“Yeah, whatever. I’m just tired of watching you freeze your ass off.”

Steve snatched the dishtowel back and tossed it onto the counter. He had a ton of anxious energy brewing under the surface, looking for an outlet and he was done being a polite host. He wanted to know why Billy was at his house.

"It must drive you crazy to submit to me in class," Billy said, the soft expression gone. He was leering now. "Once a king, now just a pretty little princess. *My pretty little princess.*"

Steve felt that electricity between them again, surging between competition and chemistry. It was the finest of lines. Steve put his hands on his hips and shook his head. "Oh really, *I'm* the princess? Not Donna."

Billy's mouth spread, tongue running over his teeth. "I told you, *you're* my partner. No reason to be jealous."

"Jealous of what? She's locked down tighter than Fort Knox so good luck with that." Steve snapped. Okay, he might be a *little* jealous.

"You actually think with that brain of yours or just use it to make snap judgments?" Billy asked, stepping into Steve's space. "You're supposed to trust me, this would be a good time to start."

"Well since I don't have any proof we're actually partners yet, forgive me for not blindly putting all my trust in you just because you fucking say so," Steve said, practically seething.

Billy groaned. Like a real, *fucking Christ, you're killin' me here* groan. "Tell me, *Steve*, what's it going to take for you to believe me?"

Steve shrugged. "Tell me if you're the leader or not." That's the only way Steve would really know for sure. But Steve wasn't about to reveal he was mated to the leader unless Billy fessed up first.

"You know I can't tell you that directly."

Steve put his hands on his hips again. "But you can tell me we're partners? You're a piece of work, you know that? Tell me how you know we're partners," Steve said.

"What are you deaf? I can't tell you. You have to trust me," Billy

said.

Steve crossed his arms over his chest. “Fine, I trust you.”

“No, you don’t. It has to be real trust to count,” Billy said.

“Wait, are we being graded on if I trust you or not?” Steve asked.

Billy sighed and pinched the bridge of his nose. “Ding, ding, ding, give the King a prize. Finally using your brain, I’m so proud. What’s it going to take for you to trust me, for real?”

Steve thought about it for a moment, because he hadn’t considered it before now. Aside from knowing Billy was the leader, which he couldn’t confirm on his own until he identified the fifth alpha, Billy’s word was all he had to go by. But...there was something flashing through Steve’s mind, thanks to Dustin and Kristy. The word *practice*.

Dustin had offered to practice nuzzling Steve, albeit that was a pretty strange and disturbing thought, but then Kristy said she’d been practicing her posturing at home. And if Billy was his partner, which Steve didn’t doubt for a second (he was just being difficult, because he could be and because Billy fucking deserved it), then they’d have to nuzzle in class, in front of everyone.

“Let me pick how you’re going to nuzzle me,” Steve said, his face hot at the suggestion.

“Pick?”

“Yeah, pick. It means choose. Select,” Steve said.

Billy didn’t seem put off by Steve’s surly tone and he hadn’t laughed in Steve’s face yet or insulted the idea. “Didn’t know there was more than one way to nuzzle someone, Harrington, but I’m all ears,” Billy said.

“I, uh, thought we could practice...figure out what it’s going to look like first before the entire class sees it,” Steve said and he could have sworn he saw Billy’s face falter before it resumed its natural bad ass glow.

“Worried I’ll ruin your pretty boy reputation?” Billy’s voice was sour.

Steve narrowed his eyes. “That’s my offer. You want me to trust you then we do it my way.”

“I’m the alpha, dipshit,” Billy said. “You’re supposed to follow *my* lead.”

Steve stared at him. Okay, so it was really more of a glare.

“Fine, Jesus, we’ll do it your way. But in class, I’m the alpha,” Billy said. He puffed out his chest, as if that would intimidate Steve. It didn’t. Not by a long shot.

“Yeah, no shit,” Steve said, glaring again. He just wanted to be a dick to Billy, because, because he just wanted to, that’s why.

“Let’s do this then, let’s *practice*.” Billy dropped his backpack to the floor and stepped closer, immediately leaning in.

Steve threw his hands up. “Whoa, whoa, whoa, hold your horses. Not in the kitchen. My parents are coming home soon, let’s go to my room to figure this shit out.”

Billy raised one eyebrow and smirked. “Lead the way, *honey*.”

~*~

They opted for practicing in Steve’s bathroom, instead of his bedroom, so they could use the big mirror, to see what their posturing actually looked like. It had been Billy’s idea. Shutting the door for privacy, that had been Steve’s, but before he could even mention it, Billy had shut the door, so really, they both had that idea. They’d never been closed in such a small space together before.

Facing the mirror, Steve motioned to his neck. “Like, from behind maybe.”

“Behind? Damn Harrington, you’re kinkier than I thought,” Billy said, moving to stand directly behind him, also facing the mirror, his hands finding purchase on Steve’s shoulders. “You have to...turn your head or something. All I see is your hair.”

Steve turned his head to the right and Billy immediately leaned in, his nose brushing under his ear. Steve flinched and dipped his shoulder to squirm away from the nuzzle, laughing nervously because, shit, Billy’s breath on his skin tickled.

“Hold still,” Billy said, hands digging into Steve’s shoulders to keep him in place. He slid his nose in to Steve’s neck again, much too fast. It felt like a tickle attack.

Steve reflexively wiggled away again, biting back a ticklish giggle. “Do you even know how to do this?” Steve asked, righting his shoulders and tilting his head a bit more once he gathered himself.

Billy met his eyes in the mirror. It was quite a sight, the two of them. Steve standing in front of the sink with his head tilted prettily to the side, revealing his neck. Billy behind him, hands on his shoulders, lips so very near Steve’s ear. This didn’t look innocent at all. Not one bit. But neither of them could stop looking.

Breaking eye contact, Billy closed his eyes and slowly, sweetly nuzzled his nose under Steve’s ear. But Steve’s eyes were open and he’d seen every little detail. Christ, Steve shouldn’t be this affected by a guy. He should have jacked off in the shower earlier, that was it, he was sexually tense and this was simply agitating it. That was all, no big deal. It wasn’t like he was hot for Billy.

And it wasn’t like Billy’s hot breath was caressing his skin and sending shivers throughout his body. Straight to his cock. Nope, that wasn’t happening. Not at all.

Billy stepped back and Steve had to brace his arms on the counter to keep from slumping over the sink. His knees were about to give out. While the move kept him on his feet, it made him bend slightly, his ass bumping back into Billy’s hips. No, not just his hips, but his groin too. Shit, Steve’s eyes flew up to the mirror.

He waited for whatever snide remark Billy would come up with—*faggot, freak, bitch*—but nothing came. Billy was looking down, looking between them, at his hips firmly planted against and framing Steve's ass. Because he hadn't moved. Or shifted or done *anything* at all.

And then Billy's eyes flicked up to the mirror where their eyes met. Steve cleared his throat and righted himself, standing up straight and effectively moving his ass away from Billy's hips. Because holy fuck.

They stared at each other for a long beat, in the mirror, until Billy casually stepped to Steve's side and faced him, hooking his thumbs in his belt loops. "So...not from behind then..."

"Uh, yeah, maybe not," Steve said. The bathroom seemed even smaller now with just the two of them in it, practically sharing body heat. Through their fucking pants.

The garage door whirled to life from somewhere deep in the house. Shit, his dad was home from work.

Steve couldn't read Billy's expression, but at least he didn't look mad. You know, for the ass-to-balls thing. And he had probably noticed Steve's slight shiver when he had his nose and mouth all up in his business. He couldn't be sure, but he might have felt Billy's lips against his neck. Not a kiss, couldn't be, but like an accidental brush.

"My dad..." Steve gestured to the bathroom door. "We should..."

Billy snorted. "What, never had a boy over to study before?"

Steve hesitated. It wasn't a put down, he could tell that much from his tone of voice, but like, it was true. That's all they were doing, school work. And Steve *hated* that that's all they were doing.

"I was going to say we should try from the side or the front, but whatever," Steve said, blowing it off.

Billy's stare was hard. Unreadable. Unbearable. "Maybe tomorrow, Hunnington. Max wants a ride to the arcade tonight."

Steve felt the lie, heavy on Billy's tongue. "Uh, sure. Tomorrow after school is fine."

Billy reached for the doorknob, clearly closed off, but he hadn't been just moments before. Steve followed him down the stairs and to the front door just as his dad came through the kitchen from the garage. He almost had Billy gone but his dad poked his head around the corner.

"That your Camaro?" Mr. Harrington asked.

"Yes, sir," Billy said, with a pleasant, people-pleasing smile. It was astonishing how quickly Billy could whip up an entirely different attitude, even if most of them were just put on in the first place.

"Dad, this is Billy. Uh, Billy Hargrove," Steve said. "We're partners for a project in sociology."

Billy glanced at Steve. Shit, Steve may have accidentally acknowledged they were partners, as if he trusted Billy already. He didn't. Not yet. He'd need more practice before that could happen. And less of Billy carrying Donna's fucking books.

"Nice to meet you. Are you staying for dinner?" Mr. Harrington asked.

"No, sir, I have to pick up my little sister," Billy said, reaching for the door.

"Next time then," Mr. Harrington said with his typical dad smile then walked away.

And then Billy was out the front door, not even a goodbye. Steve shut the door right away rather than watch him leave. But he had wanted to watch him leave. Fuck, what was happening?

Two days ago, he couldn't stand the thought of interacting with Billy and now he was all jacked up over him. Steve leaned his forehead against the front door, feeling the cool wood against his skin. Fuck, he was definitely attracted to Billy. He could finally admit it. Which, fine, whatever, it wasn't that big of a deal for Steve, he wasn't homophobic or anything, but Christ, if Billy found out...

Steve flinched, imagining the rage he'd face if Billy knew. Because, let's face it, there was no way Billy would be okay with Steve's attraction toward him. Electricity or not, Billy Hargrove was as straight as they came.

Notes for the Chapter:

I am just as surprised as Steve that Billy invited himself to Steve's house.

I was also surprised when Billy took over for the POV for the next chapter.

He's all like, "my turn bitches."

He *really* wants that Mature rating already.

#sleeveysteve is still the man though.

But he better watch out, Billy liked being pulled by his backpack strap...a lot.

#backpackbilly

I can't make this shit up. Oh wait, I did. XD

Hugs and kisses! I hope you're all having a good day.

This end note is its own chapter.

7. Chapter 7

Summary for the Chapter:

Billy hijacked the first half of this chapter, he would like you all to know his backstory.

Christ, almighty. Steve Harrington was going to kill Billy. Not really kill him, but like slow, agonizing death by sexual frustration kill him. Steve wanted to *practice* the nuzzling. Fucking rehearse that shit.

Billy thought he'd been blessed when he found out he'd get to nuzzle Steve *once* for the assignment, but now they were going to do it over and over again in Steve's fucking bathroom until they got it right, because sweet fucking Jesus, Harrington wanted to practice it. Well, fine with Billy. He'd nuzzle the fuck out of that guy even after the project required it if Steve would let him.

He'd only had a hard on for the guy since the Halloween party. But straight boys were a fucking nightmare for guys like Billy. Because they didn't realize that pushing their asses back into his hips like that turned him on, but really, they should know, common fucking sense right? Don't grind into a guy's groin expecting him to be chill about it. That was a straight up invitation as far as any man's dick was concerned.

But Billy couldn't let his dick think for him, because his dick didn't know that Steve Harrington was straight. Billy knew though, knew well enough to know that Steve was totally clueless with his big doe eyes and fussy little tantrums and always *letting* Billy into his personal space. And the goddamn eye contact.

Fuck.

Billy gunned the engine, but turned the music down so he could think. He wasn't ready to go home yet, Max didn't need a ride to the arcade, he'd made that up to get the fuck out of Steve's house. The quarry came to mind, a place he could be alone to process what had happened. And what had happened?

Well, let see. Their teacher, who was probably a closet freak in bed, had assigned the most complicated project Billy had ever seen. But he liked a good challenge and it wasn't like he had a small role. He had pulled *Alpha #1, Leader of the Clan* out of the basket.

Mated to Omega #1.

He hadn't known Steve was his mate until *after* he'd nestled him between his legs and called him honey, but he'd gone after him first because there was no way he was passing up the opportunity to dominate him, not to mention the free reign to touch Steve, guide him, pull him close, you better believe Billy was all over that shit. Under the guise of the assignment of course. He'd never try something so outrageous in real life, much less get away with it. Not in Hawkins, Indiana, definitely not in high school.

Billy steered his car down the gravel road, parking near some trees. It was dark already, thanks to it being January and all. The sun went down as soon as it came up, it seemed. But Billy liked the blanket of darkness because it made it so much easier to do what he was about to do, so he wasn't complaining.

He couldn't kill his engine, he needed the heat, but he turned off the headlights and reached for his belt buckle. Yeah, he was *that* geared up from Steve's fucking ass all over his cock that he just had to take care of it before going home. He never touched himself at home unless he was the only one in the house or in the shower. Definitely not worth it with Max in the house, she couldn't knock for shit but apparently could jimmy a lock in three seconds and barge in like she owned the place. Seems no one had given her the memo about what high school boys were doing in their rooms when their doors were locked.

But really, he didn't want to give his dad the satisfaction of knowing what he was up to. His dad didn't *know* he liked guys, Billy made sure of that. But his dad suspected. A string of girls that weren't girlfriends irritated his father to no end. *Pick one, the sex is better that way*, his father had said. Like Jesus. He didn't need to know that.

Billy's inability to commit to one girl brought unwanted attention. Fucking five girls apparently didn't keep him off his dad's radar.

Though, truth be told, he had only ever fucked two, both in California. One because he wanted to, his first time actually. She was hot, older, knew what she was doing.

He assumed it was his inexperience that made him feel disappointed by the act. She wanted to go steady after that. He didn't. Then there was this guy. He never fucked around with him, but he couldn't get him out of his head. Couldn't get him out of his clothes either, guy was as straight as an arrow. Billy's first boy crush was on a fucking straight guy.

But he bounced back and tried for some girls again. Made out with a few, never wanted them to take their clothes off but like fuck, they were always dropping their shirts and bras on the floor anyway. Luckily, not their panties. They all cooed about how respectful he was, as if. Then he met a really great girl when he had just turned sixteen. They became best friends overnight and Billy figured this must be what everyone meant when you just *knew*.

They clicked. They listened to the same music. Liked the same ice cream. So naturally, they slept together. Twice. The first time was less than stellar, Billy barely came. Claimed he wasn't feeling well, but really, he liked her better with her clothes on. Not that she wasn't pretty, she was, but that click between them wasn't physical at all. At least not on Billy's side.

They remained friends for a few months after that though it was strained, and then she got mad one night, cried, said she was in love with him and apologized for sucking in bed the first time and could they please try again. Billy hated to see her upset so took his time with her that night, explored her body, even made her come with his mouth. He didn't hate it, but it just didn't do anything for him and he never wanted to do it any of it again.

He tried to dip out of fucking her, but she begged and pleaded. It was just as bad as the first time. He just couldn't stay focused. It felt wrong and deflating and he even didn't come, stopped halfway through. And she knew it, cried even harder than before.

Billy hated to see their friendship disintegrate, but she couldn't be his friend. She never realized why he couldn't make it work with her

sexually, she was so wrapped up in him not being in love with her that she never considered he might not be in love with any girl, ever. He didn't correct her, he couldn't. He couldn't out himself when he barely knew why he was like this in the first place.

No one in his high school in California was gay. Or if they were, they weren't sucking dick on the football team to get rumors spread around about their exploits. Sure, there were gay guys all over LA and he eventually met some at the pier. Made out with a few guys, got a blowjob or two, gave a few, but never anything more. Billy had never fucked a guy or been fucked by one. But he wanted to, like really wanted to fuck Steve.

Unzipping his pants, Billy pulled his dick out and ran his hand over it. Christ. Steve's ass had been pressed against his fucking dick. It was a miracle he'd been able to keep from getting fully hard in that moment, that he'd been able to get out of that fucking house before Steve noticed.

And Steve's dad, Jesus. Luckily, the man didn't give him a once over. Lots of friendly eye contact in the Harrington family, quite the confident bunch. Billy hadn't been packing a noticeable erection or anything, but fathers just had this fucking way of *knowing*. Maybe because they too had been teenage boys once, but it's like they could see sexual shame all over a high schooler's face and felt obligated to point it out.

Wear a condom. I'm not old enough to be a grandparent yet. Stop fucking whores. Get a girlfriend, a nice one. You don't need lube, you're in high school. Lube is only for adults. Are you an adult? I didn't think so.

Yeah, his dad had found his half-empty bottle of lube right before they moved and said exactly that to him after confiscating it. He didn't want to know what his dad thought he was doing with it, but he prayed it wasn't what he was actually doing—fucking himself with his fingers. Billy thought back to Steve's comment about the lotion. He smiled, thinking of Steve buying lotion for his dry hands and some old lady at the register eyeing him and wrapping it up in a brown paper bag like it was contraband.

And Steve snatching the bag, rolling his eyes and setting her straight, *it's for my hands, they're dry.*

Fuck, Steve could be feisty. Billy loved it. He loved how Steve had this strange enigmatic aura about him but he was still freakishly low-key. Almost as if he only pulled out his King card when he really needed to and usually that only happened when Billy got up in his face.

Steve, though, and his perfect fucking lips. Billy had been lazily stroking himself, but fuck, he couldn't stop thinking how Steve had just let their arms stay pressed together in gym class. Let Billy latch onto his sleeve and pull him close, stood between his legs. He couldn't stop touching Steve if he tried, in fact he had tried, by staying on the other side of the room from him in sociology earlier and talking to that snooze of a girl, Donna, but anytime he got near Steve, it was like he got pulled into his orbit and parts of his body just magnetically went straight for him.

And Steve *never* shied away. Except that first time when he'd tripped over the desk and Billy had caught him. Steve had been evasive then, but aside from that, he just *accepted* whatever touch Billy decided to try for. But he knew better than to read into that shit. It didn't mean anything, it didn't mean Steve was interested in him.

Steve liked girls. Girls like Nancy and Donna. Proper girls. Smart girls. Feminine girls.

Billy was not feminine. Pretty, sure, feminine, no. Even if he was pretty enough, he'd certainly been told that he was prettier than a lot of girls, he was still a boy. With all the boy parts that Steve already had and probably didn't want an extra set of in his bed.

Thumbing the head of his cock, Billy shifted his hips, leaned back a bit a bit and stroked faster. He couldn't just sit out here all night, under the stars, slowly jerking off to thoughts of Steve. He was hungry and he didn't want to miss dinner.

He made it home twenty minutes later, spent and deliciously satisfied.

~*~

Steve had a plan. Act normal.

Just because he didn't feel normal, didn't mean he couldn't act normal. He had been attracted to people before, albeit they had all been girls, but he'd never acted like an over-eager twit to get any of them. Urgency was not his style, no, he had a tried-and-true method. Sit back, assess the situation, determine the best way to approach the girl and then steadily work toward her until she realized how great he was.

But this was different. He couldn't approach Billy and he doubted playing hard to get would work with a straight guy. But he could sit back and assess the situation, see if there was an opening, a glimmer of hope and if anything, he was surprisingly patient, always had been.

It wasn't like he had anything else to do anyway. His social life consisted of his ex-girlfriend and her boyfriend, a middle-schooler and his annoying little friends and chatting with his classmates in sociology. The gate was closed, his nail bat safely in the trunk of his car and it was so cold outside that all he wanted to do was sit under a blanket and drink hot chocolate. With tiny marshmallows, because come on, what was the point without tiny marshmallows?

Steve slid into his seat in sociology. It was Thursday, day four of the assignment, and he had one more day before he got nuzzled in class. Thank god too, because it was turning out to be harder than imagined between two guys who didn't get along, put their fists in each other's faces and had nothing in common except for the fact they were both stuck in the same small town. And apparently liked to stare in each other's eyes.

There was one little Hershey's Kiss on Steve's desk, wrapped neatly in its tin foil and sitting on top of a slip of paper that said, *for Steve*.

Steve picked it up by the tag, letting it dangle. Billy wasn't in class yet, so it wasn't from him. Maybe one of the girls had a crush on Steve? He looked around, most of the students were already in their seats. No one was looking at him, except for Donna. Huh. Weird. It wouldn't be from her, right? That would be ironic.

Steve heard the rustle of someone walking close before he saw it was Billy on his way to his seat. He stopped at Steve's desk, commanding his attention. Which, truth be told, Steve might be planning to act normal and he might actually succeed, but Billy always had his attention, he didn't need to command it.

Billy picked up the piece of paper, read the two incriminating words, *for Steve*, and then crumpled it in his hand. Alrighty then. Never a dull moment with this guy.

Steve just stared at him, the bell had rung and they were officially on class time, which meant he had to posture as an omega, so he'd play along with whatever his alpha Billy was up to, just to see what was next.

"Someone gave you a little treat?" Billy didn't really ask, it was more of an observation laced with intent.

"Uh..." Steve started to reply but then just nodded, saying nothing.

Billy grabbed the bottom of the Kiss, Steve still holding it up by the tag. "Who?"

"I don't know," Steve said.

Billy pulled and it slid through Steve's fingers and into Billy's hand.

He walked away, with the chocolate, and sat in his own seat. Steve didn't know what to think of any of it. But he was patient so he'd just sit back and see how things went, because as much as he liked being in charge outside of class, he equally liked Billy's unpredictable authority in class.

Miss Clemens spoke for a few minutes then announced that they were free to get up and move about for the rest of the class, but to start narrowing things down because she expected them all to be sitting

with their groups when the start of bell rang for class the next day and then they'd pair up afterwards and reveal who everyone's partners were.

Steve stayed in his seat, waiting to see who would come to him, if anyone. He was surprised when he heard Keith's voice behind him. "That's not for you, it's for Steve. Give it back."

Twisting in his seat, Steve found Keith hovering over Billy, who was still sitting and sprawled out lazily like he had nowhere to be. "*You* left this for him?" He dangled the Kiss. "That's very presumptuous of you."

"I left one for each of the omegas," Keith said, waving toward Carol and Donna. Carol held her Kiss up, backing up Keith's claim. Ah, so that's why Donna had been looking at Steve earlier, she had one too.

Billy palmed the Kiss in his closed fist and stretched back, resting his hands on the back of his head. "Why?"

Keith scowled and held out his hand. "None of your business. I said, give it back."

Billy sighed. "No."

"It's not for you."

"I'm not going to eat it. I'll give it to Steve," Billy said. "I'll tell him it's from you."

"Uh, I can hear you, you know," Steve said, standing up. "I'm like... right here."

Billy met his eyes and smiled. Actually smiled, like a real one, a pretty one. A knee-buckling one. "Steve, Keith here would like to give you a Kiss." Because of course Billy would turn it into that type of barb. And of course his smile would be viciously deceiving.

"Clearly you want to give him the Kiss instead?" Keith interjected, not letting Billy get the last word.

Billy slowly stood up. "Steve, do you want a Kiss from Keith...or

from me?”

“Uh...” Steve couldn’t believe Billy had said that. Because he *wanted* to hear Billy say that in an entirely different context of course, but in class, he couldn’t believe he was taking it this far. Was he being a leader or a bully? Or maybe it just bothered Steve because Billy was making a spectacle of Keith, who was a boy giving another boy a piece of candy. That didn’t sit well with Steve, he didn’t need for Billy to be gay or anything, but he did need him to be open minded and not terrorize him if he found out that Steve wanted an actual kiss. From Billy.

Keith looked to Steve, expectantly.

Billy looked to Steve as well, but it was a much different look, clearly waiting to see if Steve would trust him or not. And fuck, Billy kept making it so hard. How could he trust him when he was constantly pulling dumb shit?

“I, uh, only want chocolate from my partner,” Steve said, staying true to *his* assignment. He was mated after all, couldn’t just be accepting candy and trinkets from any old alpha.

Jonathan lingered nearby, stepping forward with Todd, the guy he’d been talking to the day before by the windows. It made Steve feel safe to know he was there, watching.

“You heard him,” Billy said to Keith. “He only wants it if it’s from me.”

Well, holy shit. Billy was full on declaring they were partners. Out loud, to the class. Steve didn’t know how to feel, excited, nervous. Fuck, they weren’t ready for the nuzzle yet though, it was too soon. It was only Thursday for Christ’s sake. And they’d only managed to look super gay (and super hot) with the one way they’d practiced it.

“Are you claiming Steve as your partner, your *mate*?” Keith asked in challenge.

Billy nodded. “Yep. Sure am.”

Steve glanced at Jonathan then back to Billy.

"Then make it official already and stop talking to the other omegas," Keith said. "Mate him."

"I promised him I'd only do it on Friday," Billy said, but Steve didn't recall that particular promise. At all. But maybe he meant he promised Steve that he could pick how the nuzzle went down, but since they hadn't finished practicing yet, since Steve hadn't picked yet, since Billy was still coming over after school again...Billy was doing as Steve asked, so he would trust him.

"This true?" Keith asked Steve.

Steve lowered his lashes in submission to the two alphas and nodded. "It's true. Billy is...my partner."

"*Mated* partner." Billy smirked. "So back off already. He's taken."

Miss Clemens appeared next to Steve, eyes wide and pen poised. "Wow, you guys are really getting into the assignment!" She gushed like a fangirl. Jesus. "We'll do all the mating ceremonies tomorrow, so it's okay to wait until then."

Keith relented then, not really able to push the point now that the teacher had stepped in. But he still held out his hand for the Hershey's Kiss and under Miss Clemens' watchful eye, Billy dropped it into Keith's palm.

"Let's have a meeting, just us," Billy said, motioning toward Keith and Jonathan. He motioned at Todd too. Billy looked around the room until he spotted someone. "Kristy, get over here."

Kristy perked up and scurried to his side. "You called?" She asked, a little too eager. But really, that was like her thing, always eager and wanting to please.

"We're having a meeting," Billy said to her before approaching Steve and putting his hand on his shoulder, giving it a soft squeeze. "I have to take care of some things, why don't you go chat with your friends and I'll find you later."

Their eyes were locked together again, Steve lost in their depths, but he submitted, lowering them and agreeing with the suggestion. He

waited until Billy walked away, the other four alphas in tow, before heading over to Donna and Carol, who had collected Janet at some point. Well, if the alphas were having a meeting then so would the omegas.

Steve watched the five alphas interact in the corner of the room. Watched how Billy took the lead, how they all submitted to his authority, even Todd, the one alpha Steve hadn't ID'd until now. So it was true, Billy was the leader after all. Steve hadn't doubted it, but having proof made a difference somehow.

Billy had been telling the truth, they were partners. And he had honored Steve's request. He could start trusting Billy now, not completely, no, but it was a good start.

Steve smiled to himself, not caring how dopey he might look doing so. He couldn't wait until Billy came over again after school. This time, he'd be ready for the nuzzling, none of that amateur ticklish bullshit again. He'd be ready today. Ready for nuzzling from the front and the side. And fuck it, they might as well try from behind again, right?

Damn right.

Notes for the Chapter:

Keith with the Kisses. That had been in my mind from early on.

Steve's house for more practice is up next. They need lots of practice. Both boys think so.

8. Chapter 8

Notes for the Chapter:

Thank you for all the reviews! They actually help me write and post faster :)

This entire chapter is in Steve's bathroom.

It's all about the nuzzle.

Steve looked at Billy through the mirror. The blond was a bit tenser than he'd been yesterday in Steve's bathroom, which had been further tidied and all the hair products chucked in a drawer. After he used them of course, his hair looked *perfect*. Steve's that is, Billy's just looked like it always did. Which, Steve liked it, he supposed. Hadn't really thought about it until now, because checking out a guy and noticing his hair was a new thing.

Billy leaned against the counter. "We going to do this or what?"

They'd both been quiet ever since he arrived, heading straight to the bathroom and shutting the door.

"Uh, yeah, just..." Steve turned to face him. "I have an idea, not sure if it'll help or not, but..."

He paused. Billy looked bored as hell.

"If I...put my hands on your shoulders, I can control your speed and keep from being tickled again," Steve said. The last thing he wanted was to be tickled by Billy in front of the entire class. Funny, yes, desired, hell fucking no.

Billy just stared at him. Then shrugged. "Fine, whatever, let's just try it."

Steve swallowed and stepped toward Billy.

Billy held a hand up. "What are you doing?"

"Uh..."

"I'm the alpha. I come to you, got it?" Billy said, quickly wiping his hands on his jeans but really, Steve had no idea why. It wasn't like his hands were wet or anything.

"Oh, sure, sorry." Steve stepped back to his original spot and waited.

And like, Billy made him wait, he just stood there looking at him, assessing him, as if Steve were a foreign object he'd never encountered before. He'd never felt so scrutinized before, so *seen*. Not even Nancy had looked at him with such...undivided attention.

Finally, ever so slowly, Billy took one baby-step and leaned forward. Steve reached up and put his hands on his shoulders to guide his depth and speed. But Billy was still too far away, especially his hips. Steve frowned, noticing Billy had only tilted his upper body, his lower half still planted practically where he'd started.

"You have to get closer," Steve said, like it wasn't obvious. It was. Billy would have to be unconscious to *not* realize they were too far apart.

"Shut up," Billy said, scooting forward. It still wasn't enough.

Steve opened his mouth to speak.

"I said, shut up." Billy huffed and took a bigger step, knocking into Steve's body. Because of course it was all or nothing with them.

Billy adjusted and stepped back a bit, to an actual normal distance between two people who were about to nuzzle each other. And then glared at Steve.

"Jesus, you good now?" Steve rolled his eyes on purpose, to hide his eagerness now that all of Billy was back in his intimate space. Every hair on his body felt the electricity when they stood this close. It was intoxicating and Steve loved it. Craved it. Needed it.

"Peachy," Billy said, leaning in slightly, hesitantly.

Steve's hands were still on his shoulders, so he pulled a bit and tilted his head, guiding Billy to his neck. Billy's eyes shut as his nose brushed against his skin. Fuck, Steve's eyes closed on their own too.

This felt way too good to be PG. Billy smelled citrusy, probably his shampoo or cologne, but whatever it was, it complimented his personality perfectly. Tangy and invasive, but oddly attractive.

Steve felt Billy's left hand settle on his waist as he inched his legs and hips closer. It made him a bit taller, his nose rising up under Steve's jawbone. Hot breath washed over his skin, the brush of his lips, not a kiss, definitely not a kiss, but the tip of his nose too, yes.

If Steve didn't know better, which he did, he'd assume he was about to get some. His body didn't seem to understand the difference though, that this was just practice, not the real deal, and he started melting into the touches. The touch of Billy's hand, gripping his waist, like fuck, thank you. And then the touch of Billy's face in his neck. It'd be so easy for him to just clamp down and leave a mark. Really claim him.

But none of that was real. This wasn't real. But Jesus, Steve wanted it to be real.

With a sudden jolt, Billy pulled away, stepped back and ran a hand through his hair. He cleared his throat, looking rather flushed and turned to gaze at himself in the mirror. It was then that Steve realized that neither of them had bothered to check out the position in the mirror much less keep their eyes open. Billy continued to preen and sniff, admiring himself and acting like they hadn't just been wedged together and breathing the same goddamn air. Like lovers do.

Steve leaned back against the sink and crossed his arms over his chest. The silence was killing his nerves, so he broke it. "So."

"So?" Billy didn't look over.

"That wasn't awful. It could work," Steve said. "Thoughts?"

Billy glanced at him quickly then went back to fiddling with a stray curl of his hair, trying to get it to lie down even though it looked fine. "It needs some work."

"You think," Steve said, but it wasn't a question, it was a *yeah, no shit*

dumbass. “You want to try it from the side next?”

“This is your thing, we’ll do whatever you want,” Billy said, finally turning to face him.

This was awkward, like all of it. Because it didn’t feel like two guys practicing something for class. Truth is, Steve knew that most guys in the same situation wouldn’t practice, they’d just wing it on the day and do it as fast as they could then pretend it never happened. Instead, they were constantly circling each other, touching each other, standing much too close together, like when two people liked each other and were pretending not to out of sheer fear of rejection and yet still did everything possible to create opportunities for that magical first kiss.

Steve closed his eyes, shit. Now he was thinking about Billy kissing him one of these times he leaned in. All it would take is a few centimeters and their lips would meet. But this wasn’t mutual. He had to keep that in mind. This was all in Steve’s head.

“You fall asleep, pretty boy? Didn’t realize I was boring you,” Billy said.

Steve flushed and opened his eyes, finding Billy staring at him with a hard set to his jaw.

“I, uh...”

“Whatever, you ready for some side action or not?” Billy said.

Steve bit back a grin. Side action. Shit, Billy was hot. And clever. “Yeah, show me what you got.”

Billy reached up and cupped the back of Steve’s head to tilt it for better access to his neck. It was such a vampire move. Steve knew because he could see it in the mirror. It was definitely the less risqué of their choices so far, but not nearly as fun. Or hot.

A quick, uneventful nuzzle followed. The only exciting part was Billy’s hand spread over the back of Steve’s head, buried in his hair.

It lasted about ten seconds then Billy was stepping back and shoving

his hands into the pockets of his jeans. “Well?”

“It looked okay,” Steve said, because it did. How disappointing.

Billy sniffed and shook his head. “I don’t know, it didn’t...feel right or something.”

Steve felt a glimmer of hope. The least physically affectionate way they’d tried didn’t feel right? I mean, Steve agreed whole heartedly, had a damn good reason to feel that way, but like, why did Billy think it didn’t feel right? Wouldn’t he prefer the least affectionate way, both of them being guys and all?

“Maybe from the front is best?” Steve suggested.

“Yeah, maybe. Let’s try it again. To make sure.”

Steve nodded, he’d do it a hundred times to make sure, Billy just had to say the word. They positioned themselves face to face, Steve’s hands finding Billy’s shoulders again while Billy’s hand found Steve’s waist. It looked like they were slow dancing. In junior high. Except they had the confidence to actually make eye contact.

Billy’s eyes looked so soft as his face grew closer. Steve would know, because he was staring into those pretty blues, seeing beyond the tough exterior and into his soul. Billy was human after all. Steve felt his mouth go dry and shit, it totally felt like they were about to kiss, but Billy’s face tilted lower and went for his neck. A shiver ran through Steve and he might have accidentally pulled on Billy’s shoulders, guiding him closer than necessary, but not close enough as desired.

It was a blessing that they were almost the same height.

Their chests bumped together as one of them swayed. Steve couldn’t be sure who, but it was probably him. His knees were weak again. Thank god Billy had a hand on his waist, holding him in place, but wait, when had he put *both* hands on his waist? And squeezed.

Fuck, Billy was still in his neck, way longer than ten seconds, maybe even over thirty seconds with no indication of stopping. Steve’s head rolled further to give him better access. Billy’s hands clamped down

tighter on his waist. It felt amazing. It felt like they were making out, for real. Steve squeezed Billy's shoulders in response, barely swallowing back a moan.

Billy looked up, brought himself face to face, eye to eye with him. They were definitely going to kiss, holy fuck. This was it, they were going to cross the line, right here, right now. And fuck yes, it was everything Steve dreamed of, but then, Billy batted his lashes and slid around Steve's side, ever so slowly, one hand dragging across Steve's abdomen as he moved behind him, fully behind him, like yesterday.

"Tilt your head," Billy's voice was so low it nearly made Steve hard.

Doing as commanded, he presented his neck as he felt Billy press against his back, full fucking body, even against his ass. A hand snaked up and cupped Steve's jaw, holding it in place. Steve shivered. He couldn't help it and he knew Billy had to have felt it. He was practically trembling in his arms for fuck's sake.

Steve's eyes fluttered shut, because he felt seduced, wanted, desired, lost to the sensation of being held, claimed. And then he felt Billy's tongue lick up his neck in one long, ridiculously slow stripe. What the sweet fuck.

Billy released him with a gentle shove.

Steve was definitely turned on now. And confused. Billy had to be fucking with him. There was no other explanation that made sense.

"You...licked me." Steve turned around, surprised by Billy's evil little smile.

"Thought it might really sell it," Billy said.

Well, it definitely sold Steve. "Yeah, it works I guess. Think it's too much for class though?"

"Miss Clemens will eat it up. She's a freak like that. She probably wants to see us make out."

"You think?" Steve's heart raced. The idea of them making out had literally just come out of Billy's mouth. Jesus fucking Christ.

“Yeah, she wouldn’t shut up about that first day when I had you by the sleeve,” Billy said.

The *sleeve*. Billy mentioned the *fucking sleeve*. And them making out, as if it was normal for an adult woman to want to see two boys kiss. Steve didn’t know what planet Billy lived on, but clearly the planets or stars were aligning or *something* was happening in the cosmos because they were on the same wavelength, thinking the same thoughts, probably in a different context, but whatever, that didn’t matter, but wait, Miss Clemens had said something to him?

“Said we blew her expectations out of the water,” Billy continued.

“Wait, when did she say all this?”

Billy looked away, fidgeted with his belt loop. “After class the day I was sitting on her desk and you made me wait until the last few minutes before gracing me with your highness’s presence. It was in my instructions to stay after to get my next assignment. She let it fucking slip that we’re partners. That’s why I couldn’t tell you how I knew until you trusted me, I wasn’t even supposed to know.”

“Jesus, she accidentally told you?”

“I don’t think she could help herself. She damn near didn’t take a breath, rattled on and on about how great our posturing was and what a twist of good fortune that we ended up as partners. You should’ve seen the look on her face when she realized she’d said it.”

“What did you say?” Steve asked.

Billy smirked. “Asked her if it affected my grade since I couldn’t very well figure it out myself if I already knew. She said I could tell you to make it fair, but that we’d be graded instead on if I could get you to trust me since...you know...”

Steve motioned for him to continue.

“She thought I may have pushed you too far with the posturing since you fucking bolted as soon as the bell rang,” Billy said.

“Oh...uh...you didn’t. I just wasn’t expecting it, but it’s cool. I don’t

mind,” Steve said. But how did one properly convey that they were open to more flirtatious posturing while not revealing their attraction for someone?

Their eyes met. “So you don’t mind then...if I touch you in class.”

Steve wanted to shout that he wouldn’t mind if Billy touched him anywhere at any time, but he opted for something less dramatic. He shrugged, like, no big deal. “Yeah, it’s fine. Like you said, she eats it up and we both want an A so...I don’t mind.”

Billy was the one to lower his lashes this time, gazing up at him in a freakishly innocent manner. “So if I were to do this in class, you’d be okay with it?” He reached for Steve’s hand, took it in his own and rubbed his thumb across the back of it.

The planets were definitely aligning. Sweet fucking Jesus. Steve’s voice cracked. “Yes...”

“Then what about this?” Billy bit his lower lip and Steve was sure he was about to be kissed, but Billy dropped his hand and cupped his face, this time from the front, this time his entire fucking cheek. “You’d let me do this to you...in class.”

“If it’ll really sell it...” Dear god, the sexual fucking electricity was off the charts.

Billy’s hand disappeared. “Good to know. Don’t want to push you too hard, pretty boy. But I do want an A and little miss freak has a hard on for us so let’s give her what she wants.”

While Billy’s words made sense, Steve felt a rush of disappointment. He didn’t want Billy to do all of this to get a fucking A in class or to please Miss Clemens, who, now that he thought about it could be pretty freaky in the bedroom. Could even be why some guys talked in the locker room about wanting to get up under her skirts, show her a good time. If Billy thought she was a freak in the sheets, maybe the other boys did too.

Oh shit. What if Billy wanted her? Steve wracked his brain, trying to recall if he’d ever heard Billy comment about her, but he hadn’t, he’d

only heard from Tommy that Billy had thought Mrs. Wheeler was quite the babe. Shit, what if he liked older women? And what if that's why Billy was doing all of this? Not for Steve, but to weasel his way into Miss Clemens sexual closet. Or whatever.

Steve needed to get his jealousy under control. First Donna, now Miss Clemens and Mrs. Wheeler, fuck, why had he remembered that? It was the slap in the face he needed though to remember his place. To remember that Billy was straight and nothing that was happening between them was indicating sexual interest. Not even their goddamn sexual electricity that could charge up all of Hawkins mattered. They were simply posturing for class for fuck's sake. As a mated pair.

They might even be doing too good of a job.

Because Steve bought into it, hook, line and sinker. Had fallen face first right into Billy's sexual charm and charisma.

"You want to practice from the front again?" Billy asked and Steve nodded dumbly.

Yes, he wanted to practice again. But no, he didn't want to get his damn hopes up. He'd never have Billy, how could he? This was all just a fucking grade to him, a challenge, maybe even a game and Billy liked to win. Steve would help him win, get that fucking A, he just needed to keep himself in check and not misread every little thing.

As Billy stepped into his space, Steve sighed softly, denying the feelings tugging at his heart. Just because he wanted to shag the guy, maybe get each other off, manhandle each other around while sweaty and naked, that didn't mean he couldn't enjoy what little he did have while it lasted. It was just attraction, after all, it wasn't like he *liked* Billy. Nope, he was just attracted to him. Not the same thing. Not at all.

Billy inhaled. Fuck, Steve's scent was intoxicating. Soft, not really floral but it was a feminine smell, probably whatever Steve was using in his hair. Billy loved it. He wanted to bury his nose in Steve's hair, lift him up on the counter, get between his legs, strip him out of his shirt, his pants. Kiss his neck, his jaw, his adorable fucking mouth. Kiss the sass right out of him.

But he just inhaled instead. Nuzzled around his ear lamely, inched closer without actually pressing himself against Steve and wished the other boy had the wherewithal to push him away. Like any other guy would. Why did Steve *always* let him linger? Much too close, much too long. It wasn't like he let Billy take an inch anywhere else in his life. Only with his personal space, only with his fucking body.

Steve's hands were on his shoulders and the little fucker pulled at him, bringing him even closer. As if they could get closer. Their shoes bumped as Billy went with the tug. He had to stagger their feet, causing his hip to hover dangerously over the zipper of Steve's jeans.

They were quite literally having a moment. Steve was lax in his arms, leaning *into* him instead of away. If Billy didn't know better, he'd say Steve played for the same team. But he did know better. He'd seen the boy mooning over Nancy, heard of his exploits before her, practically fucked all the hot girls in high school before he was a Junior. Impressive, but telling.

Then Steve fucking shivered. *Shivered.*

Billy struggled to keep his dick down, to *not* read into that, but Steve had fucking shivered, like he *liked* it. He was going to need to stop by the quarry on the way home again or spend an hour in the fucking shower. The quarry would be better, less scrutiny from his dad, less banging on the door from Max wanting to know if his baby soft skin had turned into a raisin or if he'd done them all a favor and drowned himself.

Very reluctantly, Billy began to pull back, copping a feel of Steve's waist again. It took everything he had not to slide his hands around

to feel up his ass.

And to top it all off, Steve looked fucking blissed out. Of course he did. Fucker was going to kill him with all his pretty expressions and willingness to be Billy's teddy bear. No wonder all the Hawkins' girls had let Steve do whatever he wanted to them. He was beyond adorable and easy to please.

Billy bit his lip, trying to control his arousal. "What's it going to be then, princess...from the front, the side or the back?"

Steve's lips parted like he'd just been fucked. "The front. Definitely the front."

"Good choice," Billy said, not moving too far from Steve because he didn't want to draw his attention down toward the situation in his pants. He needed to turn around or get the hell out of there again, but he didn't want to leave, not when Steve was so pliable and receptive. He'd take whatever he could get.

"You didn't lick me this time," Steve said. "You going to do it in class?"

Billy shrugged. "Maybe, but I'd really rather see another one of your pretty little reactions so I'm not going to tell you in advance. Makes it more authentic."

Steve's face looked flush. "Uh, about today...with Keith."

The air between them felt heady. Billy wasn't sure if he'd said too much, but Steve hadn't punched him yet, so that was a good sign. It was getting harder and harder to believe there wasn't something happening between them with the way things always *felt*. With the way Steve *welcomed* everything he did and said. Steve had to be the gayest-straight guy Billy had ever met.

"Thank you," Steve continued.

"For what?"

"For saying you were only going to do this"—Steve waved his hand around—"tomorrow."

Billy bit his lip harder this time, needing the pain to override the pleasure brewing in his gut. Scratch that, brewing *all over his damn body*. Steve was too fucking cute. Like all the damn time. “You hadn’t picked yet...”

Steve stared, his big eyes drawing Billy in. “You wanted my trust, well, you got it. For that and for letting me pick.”

“Whatever pleases my pretty little princess,” Billy said, just so he could see Steve’s cheeks pink again. Christ he would *really* please Steve if the guy would let him. He’d keep him naked and spent and whimpering as long as he could stand the attention. Because Billy would be very attentive.

“Prince.”

Billy blinked. “Huh?”

“I’m a guy so...I’d be a prince,” Steve said.

Steve never ceased to amaze him. *That’s* the word he had a problem with in that sentence? Not the *my* part or the *pretty* part. He thought for sure Steve would resist being called Billy’s anything.

“My pretty little prince...” Billy said, testing it out. “Doesn’t roll off the tongue, sorry sport, it’s gotta be princess.”

Steve rolled his eyes. “Fine, whatever. Can’t turn dickhead mode off, can you?”

“I’m not the only one, pretty boy.”

“I can turn mine off.”

“Can you?” Billy challenged.

Steve bristled. “Since you’re the only one I turn it on for, says something about you.”

“Awww, didn’t know I was that special to you, Harrington.” Billy put his hand over his heart.

Steve shoved at him a little, getting aggressive. Billy didn't hate it. It amped up the tension between them, but he wasn't about to get in a fist fight in Steve's fucking bathroom with the door shut. One of them would end up face first in the mirror. And Billy was never going to let anything happen to Steve's face again, not when it had finally healed up.

"You're not," Steve said.

Billy tilted his head and snickered. "Keep telling yourself that, *honey*. Maybe you'll believe it."

"Whatever. You hungry? I have Doritos."

Billy cocked his eyebrows. Steve wasn't backing down, just changing the subject, transitioning his aggression into something else, something more hospitable. Steve was such an alpha it wasn't even funny. A bigger alpha than himself, which is why this project was so interesting.

"Lead the way, *Steve*."

It was then that he realized he couldn't remember ever hearing Steve say his name. His last name, sure, but not his first name. He'd do anything to hear *Billy* pour out over Steve's lips. It was his new little mission, to get him to say it. Get him to *want* to say it.

If he thought he had a chance, he'd get Steve to moan it, but he wasn't going to live in denial of the basic rules of reality. Straight boys didn't moan other boy's names in pleasure.

But Steve was the gayest-straight boy he'd ever met so...maybe. Billy did always like a good challenge.

Notes for the Chapter:

Billy mentioned the sleeve!

The sleeve will make an appearance again, I think it'll have to be part of their first kiss.

Maybe it'll even be the same shirt! Steve's lucky sleeve XD

And when Billy called Steve the gayest-straight guy he'd ever met, I was like... YASSS.
That's our SleeveveeStevevee! The gayest-straight guy.
Don't worry, he's totally bi. He just doesn't know it yet.

9. Chapter 9

Summary for the Chapter:

It's mating time in class!

Notes for the Chapter:

Suzy4sammy, this chapter is for you XD
THANK YOU for the idea.

The phone rang about an hour after Billy left. Steve's mom called up the stairs to him, saying it was that little boy he always drove around on the line.

Dustin was not a little boy, he hoped he hadn't heard his mom call him that. The kid would freak. Steve was not surprised to hear him squawking up a storm as soon as he put the receiver to his ear, but he was surprised by what had Dustin all ruffled.

"Billy is your partner! And I had to hear about it from Lucas, who heard it from Mike, who overheard Nancy and Jonathan whispering about it because Billy ate your chocolate in class!" Dustin was *way* too invested in his project, but who could blame him. It was a pretty fascinating assignment.

"He didn't *eat* my chocolate, he just took it," Steve said, glancing around the living room and kitchen to make sure he was alone.

"How could you not tell me? You know I've been dying to know all week. Shit, Steve, did he nuzzle you yet? Oh my fucking god, did he bite you? Steve, you'll need rabies shots if he did and I heard they hurt like a bitch."

Steve sighed and twisted the coiled phone cord around his index finger. Apparently, this was going to be a long conversation.

"Breathe Dustin, it'll be okay. He hasn't bitten me or anything and we've been...practicing so it's fine, don't worry about me, okay," Steve said.

“What do you mean you’ve been *practicing*?”

“It was your damn idea, you offered, remember?” Steve rolled his eyes. He shouldn’t have told him they’d been practicing though, the kid had a big mouth and by morning the entire group would know.

Mike would tell Nancy, who would tell Jonathan and just his luck, they’d probably say it in front of Joyce, who’d tell Hopper and then the entire police department would know. Oh and shit, Max would tell Billy and Steve would get a black eye instead of a lick in class tomorrow. Fantastic.

Oh well, too late now.

“I didn’t mean for you to practice with Billy!” Dustin was still screeching at an eight of intensity. Steve would consider it a win if he could get him down to a six by the end of the call.

“Well, he is my partner so...figured it’d be best if I practiced with him.”

“I can’t believe you didn’t tell me when you drove me home earlier. Especially since it’s clearly not a secret. Mike said Nancy and Jonathan knew because your entire class knows so...” Dustin sounded hurt.

“Hey, hey, I should have told you, okay. It’s just a lot to take in, you know? I mean, think about it, he’s my partner for the rest of the school year and we’re not exactly friends and he pisses me off but he’s like *really* good at the assignment and I think we might actually get an A... but hey, I know you really want to know about that other thing, right, so... don’t you want to know...about how practice went?” Steve offered, hoping Dustin would take the bait and jump all over his favorite subject.

Dustin sighed. Dramatically. Right into the goddamn phone like a spaz. “You think I’m that easily distracted? By nuzzling? Seriously Steve, who do you take me for?”

“Alright then, I mean, he’s pretty good at it actually, but if you don’t want to know...”

“Okay fine! Sheesh, tell me about the nuzzling,” Dustin said, finally calming down. That boy was always all ears for anything nuzzling related. Even if Billy was involved.

Steve didn’t give him all the details, hardly any really, but he shared how they decided on doing it from the front, the back being too weird and the side way too vampire-ish. Dustin voted for the vampire way, because of course he would.

He managed to get Dustin down to a five by the end of the call, a real success, and promised to tell him all about the in-class nuzzling after school tomorrow when he swung him home to gather his things then drive him back to Mike’s for a sleepover.

Steve’s night would be free after that, he hadn’t heard of any parties this weekend, everyone all partied out after New Year’s and it wasn’t like Billy would be coming over anymore anyway. That had only been to practice and well, they’d finished practicing it and after tomorrow’s class, there’d be no need for him to come to Steve’s anymore.

Which fucking sucked.

~*~

Steve hurried through the school parking lot, convinced his ass was literally freezing off. It was getting colder each day, not warmer, and mornings were the worst. He was just to the double doors when Jonathan called after him, wrapped up neatly in a thick gray scarf. Steve dipped inside, because there was no way he was waiting for Jonathan *outside*. But he’d be happy to wait inside the doors, give his cheeks and his ass a chance to thaw. The windchill was no joke.

“Steve,” Jonathan said, shaking off the cold as soon as he was safely inside. They hadn’t had snow in the last week, but the weatherman said to get ready because it was coming this weekend. A fuck ton of it, no less.

“Hey man,” Steve said as they moved deeper into the toasty hallway.

Jonathan had a knack for using as few words as possible when speaking so Steve just waited, this was either just a friendly hello or the guy had something he wanted to talk about. Steve prayed to god it wasn't Upside Down related. There was no way any of them could fight off *demogorgons* in this fucking cold. Those demon things *liked* the damn cold, fucking thrived in it. November had been chilly enough to be tromping around the woods, January was a frigid landscape of death and they might as well hand over the keys to the town to that mind flayer thing and just lie the fuck down, they'd be easier pickings as people-popsicles anyway.

As they made their way to their lockers, they had to pass the door to the photography club's dark room and when they did Jonathan finally spoke. “Do you have a minute? There's something I want to talk to you about.” He reached for the doorknob, clearly going in there with or without Steve.

“Yeah, sure,” Steve said and followed him into the dark room, which, wasn't dark at the moment. Plus, he'd gotten to school a bit early today, nerves and all. Fuck it, he could call it was it really was, excitement. He couldn't wait to see Billy even though they still had few hours until sociology.

Jonathan put his bag down on a chair and met Steve's eyes. The guy wasn't as shy as he came across, just selective in who he gave his time to. That's what Steve had learned about Jonathan Byers. He was actually kind of cool. He wouldn't want Nancy to be with anyone else. None of the other dumbasses at school deserved someone like her, but well, Jonathan did.

Steve looked around, noticing the developing trays and he couldn't recall the last time he'd been in here. Wait, maybe sophomore year when he'd made out with Darcy. No, Dana, yeah, that was her name. She'd been a Senior at the time, it was her idea to pull him into the dark room. It had been dark in there then and she'd been surprisingly aggressive, totally messed up his hair, couldn't keep her damn hands out of it. For a few sloppy kisses that tasted like ChapStick, it hadn't been worth it.

Jesus, those days felt like a lifetime ago. Steve couldn't even identify with the guy he used to be anymore.

"Um, I'm just going to say this, because after everything we've been through, I know you wouldn't want me to beat around the bush," Jonathan said.

Oh great, he was going to announce he'd knocked Nancy up or they were running away together or some awesome shit like that. Steve couldn't wait for the big news, because no one ever started a conversation like he had and then blurted out *good* news.

"I think...shit, Steve..." Jonathan looked pained.

"Hey, it's okay man, you can spit it out. Nothing you can say that I can't handle. Unless something happened to Nancy, shit, she's okay, right?" Steve alarmed himself.

"No, she's fine, it's not about her. It's about you..."

"Me?"

"And Billy."

Steve's body felt suddenly weak and not in a good way. Like in the *here eat a cracker and have some soda sweetie so you don't pass out* way.

"Uh...what about me...and Billy?"

Jonathan fiddled with the ends of his scarf. "I think he likes you."

All the strength that had left Steve's body (that could be renewed with one tiny cracker) surged back to life, careening him into overdrive. Holy shit. YES! YES!! But wait, hold up, no. No, no, no, no no, no. He had to play it cool, he could *not* reveal his true reaction without consequences.

"Like...likes me, likes me? What makes you think that?" Steve asked. But he heard it, his own eagerness slipping out, his voice a bit higher than normal, pure joy blaring out of his mouth like a fucking ray of sunshine. Jonathan was very observant, always had been, but thank god he could also keep a secret if it came down to it, if he figured out

that Steve was *pleased* to hear that Billy liked him, that he was attracted to Billy.

“Because...he watches you the way I used to watch Nancy when you were with her,” Jonathan said.

Steve stayed silent for a beat, gathering his thoughts. He needed to say calm, not give himself away, to not hug Jonathan, squeal in appreciation then run singing from the room down the halls and into Billy’s arms, because, that’s what he *wanted* to do, but like, probably not the best idea.

He chose his words carefully. “But he obviously likes girls, right?”

Jonathan grimaced. “I bet he’s made more moves on you this week in class than any of the girls he’s hung out with since he got here. Rumor is, he hasn’t even tried to sleep with any of them. And...I’ve never seen him look at a girl the way he looks at you.”

Steve pretended to frown, his lips quivering as they tried to fight being forced them down, they wanted to turn up, reach for the ceiling, fly into the clouds and do cute little twirls. Could Billy be interested in him for real? It was like a dream come true, except the gravity of the situation started to settle in Steve’s mind. Wait, he and Billy couldn’t actually *act* on it, could they?

Steve had called Jonathan a faggot for less and Steve definitely wasn’t a faggot. And Billy couldn’t be one either. Right? Shit, what if he was? What if they both were? He hadn’t considered this could be real, that it could affect everything. He wasn’t homophobic, but everyone else was and Jesus, this wasn’t as easy as making out with a girl at a party then getting a high five from all the guys. Not that Steve was like that anymore, but still.

“He’s probably just doing all of that for class...right...I mean...” Steve said. He needed to start deflecting. “Did you tell Nancy this?”

“No, I swear, I haven’t told anyone, it’s just something I’ve noticed. I think everyone else assumes he’s just fucking with you in class because he can, but seriously, between you and me, I think it’s more than just an assignment to him.”

The chill from having been outside was finally drifting away, but Steve hardly noticed. All his mind could do was race back over every single interaction they'd had in the last few days, and Jesus, everything made so much more sense now with this added piece of information.

Jonathan must've assumed Steve's silence was a bad thing. "Hey, I might be wrong, in fact, I hope I am, but if it's true and he does...feel that way about you, be nice to him okay. I know what it feels like to be on the receiving end of that stick and I'm only attracted to girls so I can't imagine how it'd feel if it were true and then be ridiculed for it."

Steve's heart hurt. "You think I'd ridicule him for it?"

"No offense, but you don't have the best track record. You tend to taunt first, apologize later. Just...I know you've changed a lot, you're a good guy, and I consider you a friend, but Billy seems fragile if you really take a closer look at him. I don't think he's as tough as he comes across," Jonathan said.

"Shit," Steve said, because really, Jonathan did have a point. He had been known to act first, regret later and he didn't want to be that guy anymore, he'd like to think he'd completely evolved beyond it and maybe he had, but that didn't mean he was perceived in that new light yet. "Yeah, man, thanks for letting me know...I, uh...don't want to call him out on it or anything, I wouldn't, not anymore."

Jonathan offered a sad smile. "Does it freak you out, to think that a guy might want to...do things with you?"

Steve felt a rush of heat in his face. "I just...uh, no."

"No?"

"I'm not weirded out or anything, lots of girls have had crushes on me before and I just never thought about what they wanted to do with me. Hell, he's better looking than half of them so, no big deal."

Steve chuckled, playing it off, but truly afraid he may have revealed too much, especially if the look on Jonathan's face was anything to go by. He looked surprised, curious. Suspicious.

“Yeah, I can see how you wouldn’t think about it. But hey, I’m not going to tell Nancy or anything. I wanted you to know just in case it’s true so you have time to process it before you say something that might crush him,” Jonathan said. “I’m not sure Billy could handle being outed.”

“Yeah, thanks for the heads up and...I’m sorry I’ve been such an asshole to you all these years. You didn’t deserve it.”

“No one deserves it, but thanks Steve, I appreciate it.” Jonathan smiled and stuck out his hand.

Steve whapped him playfully on the shoulder then shook his hand. He really did like Jonathan, especially since the guy never held back with the honesty. He felt he could speak man to man with him and he valued that and who knows, maybe that’d come in handy later if something did happen with Billy. He knew that if Jonathan said he’d keep it to himself, he really would.

Steve ducked out of the dark room and headed to his locker. It’d be interesting to observe Billy from now on from this fresh perspective and honestly, Steve was stoked. *This* was the glimmer of hope he’d been itching for.

HALLE-fucking-LUJAH!

~*~

Billy sat with the alphas. Or rather, they sat with him. He had picked a corner of the room and they’d all flocked to his side, because he was the leader and he was damn good at it. It was as if this assignment had literally been made for him by some divine orchestrator to flex his superiority and get his hands all over Steve.

The other alphas were an eclectic bunch. He’d caught Jonathan watching him a few times during the week, but it wasn’t *that* kind of look. More like he was sizing him up. He didn’t really know him, hadn’t said more than ten words to the guy until yesterday during

their alpha meeting. But he liked his energy, liked that he knew himself and couldn't be swayed by the other stupid kids at the school. He respected Jonathan.

Kristy was annoying, but harmless, and in dire need of a makeover and a good fucking, though he didn't have a clue who would actually fuck the poor girl. Todd seemed alright, didn't have much to go on with him yet, but Keith, Billy was going to strangle Keith if he made one more fucking move on Steve.

If Keith turned out to be straight, Billy would eat his fucking leather jacket. There was no way Keith wasn't bisexual and attracted to Steve. He put on the typical football jock act but Billy saw through it like pane of glass with come splattered all over it. Keith was probably *that* guy that would *let* the school's gay kid suck his dick, but would never reciprocate because he was *straight*.

Billy's eyes kept flickering over to the omega group, to Steve, who seemed happier than usual. Like really happy. He was all smiles, kind of glowing, radiant like a rainbow or some shit. It drove Billy crazy. He hoped it wasn't because Steve was the only guy in a small group of girls. Carol was taken of course, but Donna and Janet were pretty enough, both single if Billy correctly recalled whose names were on the list of available girls Tommy had rattled off prior to Christmas.

Donna was untouchable, Steve had been right about that. Guys joked that she wore a metal chastity belt and they'd long given up asking her out, she wouldn't even go on a date with anyone much less put out. But Janet, well, Billy had heard she liked to suck dick, it's how she kept her virginity intact. Too bad she was a girl otherwise Billy would set her up with Keith. They'd be perfect for each other.

She'd suck Keith's dick, he wouldn't reciprocate and her virginity would see another day. Bet he wouldn't even go down on her. Fucker.

Steve would though, he'd go down on her. Probably get his tongue all up inside her, make her shake, make her come, take her for round two as soon as she could handle it.

Billy shifted in his seat, the stirrings of arousal threatening his big plan for the day. Couldn't very well mark Steve while sporting an erection. Miss Clemens would dig it but he doubted Steve would appreciate it pressed into his hip.

"Today is the big day!" Speaking of their little she-devil of a teacher, she'd finally put down her pencil to address them.

A flash of Steve tonguing out Miss Clemens turned Billy on even more. It's not like he got turned on by thinking about girls getting eaten out, he didn't. He got turned on thinking of Steve doing *anything* sexual with practically anyone. It also made him wildly jealous and possessive, but still, it was like really fucking hot.

Except for Keith. He'd never imagined Steve doing anything with Keith except kicking him in the balls.

"I see everyone is sitting in their correct groups so let's move on to the next part of today's assignment, declaring your partners! We'll come back to your groups next week so for now you have the next two minutes to pair up with who you think is your partner. Everybody ready? Okay, go!" Miss Clemens needed a good fucking too, she was way too excited, like all the damn time. Couldn't one of these guys actually take one for the team, bone her, put them all of their misery, because what were they, kindergartners playing musical chairs?

Billy made his way to Steve, pleased that he stayed put in his chair and waited for him to come over. Stevie-boy could take direction it seemed. *I'm the alpha. I come to you, got it?* Billy had said that yesterday, Steve had listened. And was still following the instruction. Christ, that made Billy hot, Steve submitting to him.

Billy slid into the empty seat in front of Steve, twisting around to face him. "You ready for it?"

"Yes."

Steve lowered his damn eyes in that way he always did in class and sweet fucking Jesus if Billy didn't eat it up. He wanted to yank Steve out of his chair and across his desk, pull him into his lap, cup his chin

and kiss him right there in front of everyone. And he'd probably even get away with it. Steve would probably *let* him do shit like that.

The class would be scandalized but then Miss Clemens would probably climax in joy and give them an A for the entire semester on the spot. Then everyone would be copying them for a good grade, kissing whoever they could get their damn hands and no one would think twice about it. That Billy had kissed Steve.

But alas, that wasn't on the agenda for today. Something else was, something he hadn't run by Steve but hoped he'd lean into, because omega Steve was a little slut for him like that. Easy and eager.

"There are four mated pairs in the class so let's start with them. First up, let's have your leader come forward with his partner and we'll have the first mating ceremony!" Miss Clemens announced.

He stood up and held his hand out and Steve fucking took it, shyly looking down when Billy ran his thumb across the back of his hand like he'd done in the bathroom. Suck on that Keith. It was rather insane that he was leading Steve by the hand in front of their entire class, but he was and he was going to get away with it, all thanks to Miss Clemens' freaky-deaky little project.

"Clan, Billy is your alpha leader and Steve is his omega mate," Miss Clemens said when they got to the front of the room. "Steve is the only male omega."

Billy dropped Steve's hand and looked out over the class, suddenly questioning his decision. He couldn't do what he was about to do, could he? He definitely *shouldn't* but fuck it, go big or go home, right? Or straight to detention. He didn't want detention, but it was definitely a risk he was willing to take.

Steve would forgive him. Probably. Maybe. Shit, hopefully.

Steve waved to the class, like they were some sort of clan royalty. It was cute. Billy loved it, but didn't bother to wave himself, he had an image to portray, the strong leader and Steve got to be the cute one, the friendly one.

“Alright, so let’s have the first nuzzling, Billy, if you’d like to lead the clan in showing them how important having a mate is...” Miss Clemens continued, motioning for them to proceed.

Since they were facing the class, Billy put his back to the students and moved in front of Steve so everyone would see his expression when he did what he was about to do. Their eyes met. Dear lord, Steve looked so trusting and pliant as he raised his hands to Billy’s shoulders.

Billy thumbed Steve’s collar down with one hand, gripped his waist with the other. And then he leaned in.

With his head blocking everyone’s view of what he was doing, Billy took full advantage and went straight for Steve’s neck with his lips. And his teeth. He bit down, not too hard, and felt Steve flinch from surprise. He released the skin from his bite and soothed it with a lick, a much smaller, quicker lick than he’d done the day before and then he did the one thing he’d been planning on all along.

He latched onto Steve’s neck and sucked.

Steve tensed, his hands squeezing at Billy’s shoulders in reaction. He would have done anything to see his face, but he continued on with his task and gave him one hard suck before letting go with a pop.

Billy stood back to admire his handy work and see if all hell had broken loose in the classroom.

There, on Steve’s long, pale neck, was a small, purple hickey, compliments of one Billy Hargrove and nobody could deny who’d given it to him.

Their eyes met again, but this time Steve’s were wild and unsure. Billy watched the realization dawn on his face. Watched his hand dart up to cover the spot, as if to check it by touch, but he’d only see it later in the mirror. He’d know he carried Billy on his skin then.

Steve looked like he wanted to say something, but he didn’t. Billy smirked and stepped to the side, giving the entire class the view he’d been waiting for them to see—his mark on Steve’s neck.

“Oh! Steve, let me see, are you alright?” Miss Clemens bustled past Billy.

She gently pulled Steve’s hand off of his neck and several of the boys snickered. One of the girls said *oh my god* and Billy, well, Billy just took it all in—the shocked faces of the students, the mother hen fussing of their teacher, the blood pumping through his veins screaming *mine* and Steve lost in a cloud of confusion.

Billy looked directly at Keith and smiled. Fucker. Now he’d know Steve was really off limits.

“It’s okay, it’s just a little red, it’ll be gone before you know it,” Miss Clemens said, sighing in relief, but who did she think she was kidding? The mark was dark purple and clearly a hickey and it’d be there for days. It wasn’t just going to up and disappear before the end of class bell rang. “Okay, so, thank you Billy and Steve for that... very realistic mating ceremony...you may return to your seats and we’ll have the other three mated pairs come up now. Don’t be shy!”

Steve didn’t stomp away or glare at him so Billy took that as a good sign that he wasn’t on his shit list yet. He also hadn’t seen the hickey yet, but he had waited for Billy to lead them back to their seats so at least he wasn’t going to freak out in class or anything.

He sat, feeling a bit unsettled, because he’d really taken a fucking chance and detention could still be on the horizon so he was surprised when Steve leaned and whispered into his ear, “want to come over tonight?”

Billy nearly groaned. Hell fucking yes he wanted to come over. Christ though, was Steve *that* dense? That he didn’t realize what had just happened. That he’d been publicly *marked*, claimed and spoken for. By Billy. Who was clearly a guy.

“Sure, whatever.” Billy loved pretending to be nonchalant when he was really geared up beyond belief. Friday night at Steve’s house, just the two of them. Maybe Steve wasn’t entirely straight.

Maybe Steve was bi.

Billy couldn't get his hopes up yet, but he could start looking out for tell-tale signs. Steve wasn't as easy to read as dumb fuck Keith and his *please suck my dick* eyes, but maybe that's only because Billy assumed he was straight and never considered otherwise. There were no rumors about Steve liking dick.

Regardless, he'd just given the boy a fucking hickey in class and instead of getting punched in the face or shoved to the floor and screamed at for being a fag, he got an invite to his fucking house. That had to mean something. Either Steve was going to bury him in his backyard or offer him some more Doritos and maybe one of those beers he'd caught a glimpse of in the fridge.

"Anytime after eight," Steve said and Billy nodded without replying or turning around to look at him.

Oh hell fucking yes. He'd be there with mother fucking bells on.

Notes for the Chapter:

Dustin and Jonathan just showed up in this chapter and I was like, *fiiiiiine, you can have your little conversations with Steve*, but we all just want Billy and Steve, let's be honest.

I assume Billy hasn't heard the last of giving a boy a hickey during school hours for a class project yet. I'm sure the other students and the the faculty have something to say about it. There will be fallout.

Billy, dear, I'm the divine orchestrator. You're welcome sweetie.

SleeveyStevey we love you!
#hickeyharrington for the win!

10. Chapter 10

Summary for the Chapter:

Friday night at Steve's house.

Steve changed his shirt three times before Billy arrived. Nancy always said he looked good in dark green, brought the hazel out in his eyes, so he settled on that color even though it wasn't the warmest shirt he had. Truth be told, it was the same shirt Billy had latched on to the sleeve so it was sentimental in a lame *he touched my sleeve* type of way.

They'd both gotten railed on by the other guys during gym class. Billy had taken it in stride, laughing with them as if he hadn't been the one to suck a hickey onto Steve's neck front of everyone. Steve ignored the lewd comments, but did have to slap Tommy's hands away from his neck. Twice. Weirdo wanted to touch it.

Miss Clemens had asked them to stay after class. Didn't take a rocket scientist to guess why. She *loved* how committed they were to the project, *but* maybe dial it back a bit, not give the square kids a stroke just yet. Keep it G rated, like a cartoon Disney movie.

Billy pointed out that Cinderella and Snow White were getting smooched on even with a G rating and Miss Clemens actually fucking blushed and stammered on about how necking and kissing were *not* the same thing.

And then Steve had to *show* Dustin the hickey, lest he heard about it from Lucas, who would hear about it from Mike, who would hear about it from Jonathan and Nancy because *everyone* was talking about it. For real. Steve already had a fucking nickname by the end of the day.

Hickey Harrington.

Christ, that one might actually stick.

He liked Hunnington better, but whatever. That one hadn't stuck. It

wasn't like anyone thought they were actually into each other though, thank god. No one had made *that* kind of comment, just typical jabs and jeers and stupid jokes about Steve being a girl and Billy clearly being king now that he'd pulled that bad ass move in class, at school, on Steve "Hickey" Harrington. No one else in Hawkins had balls that big so he had to be cool. The coolest.

But Jonathan had given Steve a look. That *see, he likes you* look. Steve may have preened a bit too much in response, he could sense Jonathan was already on to him so why fucking hide it? But shit, for real, he really needed to hide it. What was he thinking?

And soon, Billy was coming to his house and Steve's parents were out of town for the weekend, had left early that morning for New York. Thank god too, because he didn't feel like explaining the hickey to them. They knew him and Nancy had broken up and he'd successfully avoided all questions about that so far, no need to get their curiosity up about *who* might be sucking on his neck these days. Class project or not, they would probably be taken aback that the hickey came from a boy.

The hickey. Holy fucking Christ. It was a real, legitimate hickey. On his neck, from Billy.

Steve had absentmindedly touched it no less than fifty times since he got it. He'd gotten up real close to the mirror and looked at it, stared it at, run his fingers over it.

Jonathan had to be right. Billy had to like him. Because nothing else made sense. It wasn't like Billy was fucking with Steve, or if he was, he was failing miserably. Because Steve didn't feel fucked with, he felt seen, *liked*, desired.

The doorbell rang and Steve ran to the door, threw it open as butterflies danced viciously around his stomach and then immediately let the smile die on his lips. It was just the pizza delivery guy.

He'd ordered early because it was supposed to start snowing later and they always took forever once one measly flake hit the ground. They could always warm up it if it got cold before Billy got there, but

speaking of the devil, just as the pizza guy was heading back to his car, cash in hand, the distorted blare of Scorpions pulled into his driveway.

Steve didn't have a jacket on, but he stood in the open door anyway, pizza box in hand, shivering and watching as Billy got out of the Camaro, crushed a spent cigarette under his boot then sized up the pizza guy as he scrambled into his warm car. Like he was competition or something.

As if.

"You going to come in or what?" Steve called out. Smirking.

Billy huffed, shoved his bare hands into his pockets (again with the bare fucking hands) and sauntered to the door, slipping past Steve without a word.

Steve glanced at the grandfather clock in the foyer. It was 8:07pm. He couldn't help but feel giddy that Billy had arrived as soon as time permitted. The guy could have shown up at ten or eleven if he wanted, but no, he was there at eight.

"I ordered pizza," Steve said, locking up the front door as he handed Billy the box.

"No shit." Billy took it and just stood there.

"Uh, let's go into the kitchen. You hungry?"

Billy's arms were still tight against his body, still cold. He followed Steve and put the box down on the counter.

Steve busied himself pulling plates out and fishing two Mountain Dews out of the fridge. "Go ahead and grab what you want," he said to Billy, noticing how the guy just lingered by the oven, hands back in his pockets.

"I'll wait until your parents get theirs first," Billy said and Steve swiveled around from the fridge to look at him.

"You'll be waiting until Monday then, they're out of town for the

weekend. Pizza is for us.”

He could have sworn he saw Billy’s eyes light up. He hoped it was because he was happy they were alone and not because they had full run of the pizza.

“Shit, you got this whole place to yourself? Should’ve had a party.” Billy took an offered Mountain Dew can then set it down and flipped on the faucet, adjusting it and testing the water.

Steve opened the pizza box, eyeing as Billy warmed up his hands the way he taught him and then dug around in a drawer for a dishtowel for him. “I don’t have big parties. Had one sophomore year, my parents threatened military school if I had another one so I lay low with having people over now.”

“Didn’t know the invite to hang out here was so special,” Billy said, drying his hands.

Steve cleared his throat and looked away, fiddling with the plates. “Uh, yeah. I don’t have people over much anymore...”

“You’ve had me over three times this week.”

“For school.”

“Uh huh. What about tonight? This ain’t for school,” Billy said, taking a plate and arranging three pizza slices on it.

Steve felt all of his shackles go up. Billy was going straight for it. Damn, he hadn’t been expecting that. Maybe the guy really did like him, maybe he thought the invite was code for hooking up. Maybe it was, but Steve was still anxious, apprehensive. He’d never done anything with a guy before, didn’t know if Billy even wanted to and he didn’t know if he could handle being *wrong* about all of this and becoming the laughing stock of the entire school come Monday morning.

“Relax, I’m just fucking with you,” Billy said, biting into his first piece. He leaned back against the counter, plate in one hand, pizza slice poised near his face in the other. They hadn’t bothered with sitting at the table.

“You do that a lot,” Steve said, shaking a string of melted cheese off his finger as he dug into the pizza box.

Billy chewed slowly. And stared at Steve. “Can’t help it. You’re easy to fuck with.”

Steve snorted. “You and I must have a different definition of easy.”

Billy put his plate down and cracked open his Mountain Dew, taking a huge swig of it. “You’re easier than you think, pretty boy.”

Jesus, Billy was going to be the death of him. Steve flushed, dropped his pizza onto his plate and despairingly watched half the cheese slide off. Fuck. He tried to maneuver it back into place, eating a stray pepperoni in the meantime.

“I’m definitely not easy.”

Billy actually laughed. “That’s not what I’ve heard.”

“You must’ve heard wrong then.” Steve felt a bit embarrassed. Shit, he was easy, wasn’t he? He’d just never been put on the spot like this before, always been admired for his playboy ways, never once been told he was *easy*. Girls were easy. Boys were...Jesus, it was such a double standard. Steve couldn’t even stand it now that he thought about how girls were treated for the exact same thing guys were congratulated for.

“Little Miss Clemens about lost her shit today,” Billy said, already on his second piece.

“Yeah well, you gave me a fucking hickey in class, I’m surprised she didn’t send you to the principal’s office,” Steve said.

Billy smiled. “Looks good on you, would’ve been worth it.”

Steve’s face turned hot. Jesus Christ. Billy *was* hitting on him, wasn’t he? Holy shit. Because that’s the sort of shit Steve would have said to charm a girl. Well, he certainly wouldn’t have managed to give the girl a hickey before kissing her, that was a feat only Billy could accomplish. And let’s face it, he’d done that quite well with plenty of witnesses no less.

“You think this looks good?” Steve ran his fingers over the mark.

“I don’t know, might need a closer look.” Billy put his plate down and wiped his hands on the dishtowel. “Come here.”

Fuck. Christ. Jesus. Holy shit.

Steve didn’t know which word to settle on so his brain just rapid fired all of them at him. He put his plate down and finished chewing, sipped at his soda, all the while glancing up at Billy, whose eyes were on him, and then moved closer, reminding himself to act cool and not fucking shiver again.

Billy’s fingers were warm as they touched Steve’s neck. Holy hell. This was happening way too fast. Steve wasn’t ready, he was, but he wasn’t. They hadn’t even finished eating yet, but he needed *something* to happen, anything to put him out of his misery of this tension between them, pulling them together every chance it got, demanding they touch and breathe the same goddamn air.

And then Billy’s hand moved higher, his thumb running across the corner of Steve’s lips. “You’ve got sauce...”

Billy gently wiped at his mouth then pulled his thumb back and licked it. He fucking *licked* it, all while holding eye contact and acting like this was the most normal thing in the world. Like people who were not moms with their children did this to each other all the time, like boys did this to each other.

Steve would have slapped Tommy’s hands away for the same thing. In fact, he *had* slapped his hands away earlier for even attempting to touch his neck, much less his goddamn lips. He might have let Jonathan touch his neck, but like he even wouldn’t try something like that or even think to do it unless Steve was bleeding out, because guys just didn’t touch each other unless they were rough housing.

Sniffing, Billy picked up his plate and went for his third piece of pizza. As if that hadn’t just happened.

Steve stepped back, even more anxious than before and reached for a paper napkin to wipe his mouth. He threw one at Billy when he was

done. His mom hated when he used her dishtowels for any part of his face, they were only for dishes and hands she always said.

The silence between them hung heavy. Billy even had the good sense to look like maybe he'd taken things too far. He hadn't, dear god he hadn't taken them far enough, but Steve needed a moment to gather himself. To consider the line they were clearly about to cross. How far would they take it? Just a kiss? Would they get naked? Touch each other?

It was all new territory yet oddly familiar. And Steve clearly wasn't in the lead when it came to this, not like he was with girls. Billy had seized that role, set the pace for them and Steve really had to trust him going forward.

Fuck, had Billy done this before with other boys? The thought comforted him that he might have, that he might know what he's doing, but it also sent a rush of jealousy through him.

"Pizza is good," Billy said.

Steve offered a polite smile. All the while freaking out in his head. His thoughts were jumbled, but his mouth was already speaking.

"I'm not..." Steve meant to say *I'm not sure what to do next*, but realized he couldn't say that without giving himself away and he wasn't ready to take make that big of a confession yet, but unfortunately, *I'm not* also sounded like the beginning of something entirely different.

Because Billy's face hardened. "I'm not either. Just fucking with you, man."

Oh, crap. Steve hadn't meant to put him on edge. "No, I...didn't mean..."

Billy slammed his plate down and wiped his mouth with the back of his hand. "Whatever. Like I said, you're easy to fuck with."

Well, that hadn't gone well. Steve nodded dumbly, choosing to keep his mouth shut as he didn't want to keep making it worse.

“Can I smoke in here?” Billy asked.

“Uh, no, but we can go out back. Let me get my coat.” Steve hurried out of the kitchen, trying to figure out how to salvage his colossal fuck up. It’s the one thing Jonathan warned him about, to think before he spoke. Granted, he hadn’t made fun of Billy or anything, but he had accidentally shot him down and practically said that he wasn’t into guys so back the fuck off.

Billy had an unlit cigarette in his hand by the time they got outside. The pool was covered for winter and snow was starting to gather on it. Not much, but it had started snowing lightly.

“Never really saw snow until I moved here,” Billy said, lighting it with his Zippo. “Want one?”

“No thanks,” Steve said, fishing his gloves out of his coat pockets, bouncing a bit to keep warm. Fuck it was cold. “It’s snows a lot here. Better get used to it and get a pair of gloves already, for real. You’re going to need them when you have to scrape off your car.”

“I’ll be fine,” Billy said, inhaling and holding in the smoke for a beat before letting it out.

“Christ, don’t risk frostbite just because you want to look tough, even bikers and truckers wear fucking gloves in the snow. I have an extra pair you can have if you want.”

“Yeah, sure.”

“Really? You’ll take them?” Steve was surprised he didn’t put up more of a fight.

Billy shrugged. The life had been sucked out of him in the kitchen and hadn’t returned yet. Steve needed to get that little spark back between them, needed to let Billy know he was open to something happening. He didn’t want to be the one to put his ass on the line, but fuck it. He manned up and said something he had seen someone do at a party once.

“Hey, so...I don’t really smoke because I always choke on the inhale, but maybe I’d do better if you, uh, shotgun me...” This was either

the most brilliant thing he'd ever uttered or the stupidest.

By the look on Billy's face, it was the stupidest. Shit, maybe Billy really was just fucking with him and Jonathan was wrong.

Billy blew smoke out of his mouth. "No."

Steve wanted to die. Or at the very least run into the house, lock Billy out and throw himself under his covers and pretend that he'd never said that and then been turned the fuck down. Come Monday he'd not only be Hickey Harrington, he'd be the school's biggest fag and it'd be spray painted all over his locker.

"If you don't smoke, don't start. Shit's addicting," Billy said. "I'll shotgun you if it's weed."

"I don't have any weed..." Steve babbled, goddammit why didn't he have any fucking weed? But the relief. Christ, the relief was so sweet. Damn near saved his soul. Billy *would* shotgun him and that had to be a good thing, right?

Even though they weren't about to shotgun and hover their lips dangerously close together, it had the intended effect. Billy perked up. Had apparently gotten Steve's message loud and clear. The energy shifted between them and Steve knew they were back on track. Something would likely happen, he hoped. He just didn't know when.

They stayed outside for a minute or so longer then headed in and stripped off their coats and shoes to dry by the sliding glass door. Steve grabbed two beer bottles out of the fridge and popped the caps off. They hovered in the kitchen again, sipping at them and leaning against the counters near each other.

"So...want to watch a movie or something?" Steve asked.

Billy shook his head and laughed. "Jesus, Harrington."

"What?"

Billy put his bottle down and reached for Steve's sleeve. It was the same shirt, the same goddamn *sleeve*, as from when he'd done it in

class. “No, I do not want to watch a fucking movie.”

Steve felt the tug and shuffled forward, breath caught in his throat. Jesus. Billy was going for it right now, drawing him in by the sleeve. It was the sexiest thing he’d ever experienced.

Billy took the bottle out of Steve’s hand when he got closer and put it on the counter next to his. “And I don’t want to fucking shotgun you either.”

“You don’t?” Steve heard his own voice, wasn’t aware he’d actually spoken though. Bells were going off in his head, warning him that the line was rapidly approaching and once it was crossed there was no laughing it off, no going back. If they did this, things would be very different between them.

“I’d rather do something else,” Billy said.

“Oh...what’s that?” Steve whispered because they were *that* close that a normal tone of voice would be too loud.

Billy’s hand slipped down from the sleeve, trailing across Steve’s fingers. Both their faces tilted, angling as they glanced between eye contact and each other’s lips. Their lips hovered, oh so close, but didn’t quite touch.

“I want to shut you up,” Billy said.

“I want you to shut me up.”

“Yeah?”

“Yeah.”

And oh sweet Jesus, Billy shut him up.

Their lips met softly, much softer than Steve imagined Billy could be. And Steve moaned into the kiss. Because fuck, finally!

But Billy pulled back after a few seconds, looked into his eyes and laced their fingers together as if that one little kiss had satisfied him forever. Well, fuck that, Steve needed more, a lot more and surged

forward, stealing another kiss. A deeper one, a hungrier one. Billy's free hand grabbed his hip, squeezed and then worked its way up to his face, cupping his jaw.

The kiss tasted like beer and pizza and cigarette smoke until it didn't. It felt like relief, until it felt like need.

And Steve needed more.

Notes for the Chapter:

Well now that THAT'S out of the way, I wonder what they'll get up to next.

Billy doesn't exactly know how to drive in the snow so... snowed in weekend at Steve's?

Thank you for all the comments!

11. Chapter 11

Notes for the Chapter:

This chapter earned the upgrade to the explicit rating XD

Billy couldn't believe it. Even with Steve fucking Harrington latched onto his mouth, offering up the sexiest little noises and kisses (the guy could kiss, he'd give him that), he still couldn't believe it was actually happening. And it *was* happening, Christ.

Steve's hands were all over him. Down on his ass, up his back, all over his arms, shit, this guy was really turned on. Billy's brain had trouble catching up. Ever since Steve had asked him over *after* laying a hickey on him in class, he knew there was a *chance*. But in no way did he think this would really happen. He wasn't even trying to make a move on Steve when he'd wiped the sauce off his lips. And Christ, Steve had just fucking *let* him. Which was the point. Billy needed to test the line, test Steve's limits.

But of course, Billy feared he'd pushed him too far when Steve had shut down, flustered and lost, rambling about *not* being like *that* or some shit. Billy had almost left, unable to risk anything else, but Steve looked so damn hot and there was still so much more he could try to gauge Steve's interest so he sucked it up and decided to smoke instead, maybe try to salvage the evening and get another good look at his masterpiece, the hickey.

And then like some sort of divine intervention, Steve had fucking asked to be shotgunned. And Billy would have if it hadn't been so damn cold outside. He really did need gloves. Fuck Indiana and fuck ten days in a row of below freezing temperatures. People were wrong, Hell wasn't hot, it was fucking freezing.

Billy let Steve blindly guide him out of the kitchen and into the living room. Neither of them had the good sense to break apart, instead, they stumbled around the arm of the sofa as Steve backed him into sitting down first, and for good reason apparently, because Steve planted himself in Billy's lap, straddling him while his pupils were

blown wide and his hair a fluffed out a bit to the side. It looked damn cute.

"I thought I was losing my mind this week, man," Steve said and Billy squeezed his hips. Because they were *right* there in front of his hands, just hovering like perfect handles for him to grab onto and take for a ride and he definitely wanted to give Steve a good ride.

"A whole week, that's some real survival skills there, amigo, try since Halloween for me," Billy said.

Steve pecked him on the lips. It was so goddamn sweet that Billy was never going to get over this guy. Not in a million years.

"Tell me." Steve's lips found his jaw.

"You first, pretty boy," Billy said, tilting his head to give Steve's meandering lips access to his ear. *Christ*.

"Everything. Jesus, it was everything," Steve said, catching Billy's earlobe between his teeth.

"Yeah..."

"Yeah. You were constantly touching me..."

"You were constantly letting me," Billy said.

"And standing so close to me..."

"You never backed away."

"And the way you looked at me, Jesus, like you *wanted* me," Steve said, leaning back so they could look into each other's eyes.

"I totally wanted you."

"When did you know...that I wanted you too..." Steve asked, suddenly shy.

"Never had a guy ask me to shotgun them before. Figured you were into me or Indiana teenagers are more fucked up than I thought."

"Indiana teenagers are totally fucked up. *And* I'm totally into you." Steve huffed out a little laugh.

Billy licked his own lips then cupped the back of Steve's and brought him in for a thorough licking of his own. "You remember the Halloween party?" Billy asked, loving how easily Steve let him at his neck again.

"Yeah, that's when we first met..." Steve said, head rolled to the side, eyes opening and closing.

"I'd seen you before, at school," Billy said. "Hated everything about you."

Steve's eyes fluttered open. "Wha—what? You hated me?"

Billy smirked, licking the taste of Steve's mouth from his lips again. "Hated how fucking hot you were..."

Steve moaned. "Oh fuck."

"Hated how you had a girlfriend."

"I don't have one now," Steve said.

"Hated how you ignored me. Like I didn't matter." Billy gently bit Steve's lower lip between his teeth then sucked his mouth into a deep kiss. "So yeah, I hated everything about you, because I couldn't have you..."

Steve groaned again.

"And I fucking *wanted* you," Billy said.

He pulled down on Steve's hips, he needed the friction on his dick. And Steve, little fucker, was just eating it up. Such a little slut for him. God, Billy prayed he wouldn't wake up from this, head on his pillow, eyes blurry from sleep and realize it was all a fucking dream. Because this was amazing. This was mind blowing and Steve fucking Harrington was perched on his lap, moaning and panting and they still had all their clothes on.

Imagine what a mess he'd be if they actually got naked.

"You've wanted me for that long..." Steve said, didn't ask, wasn't a fucking question, more like a pleased little tease.

Billy growled. Couldn't help himself really. Steve was *grinding* on him now, all on his own, and Billy was *hard*. Harder than fucking concrete and he wasn't sure how far they could take things just yet, didn't know if Steve had done this before with a boy.

It was one thing to make out. Quite another to stare down another guy's hard ass dick.

"Don't move like that unless you want more," Billy bit out.

Steve met his eyes and bit his lower lip, real sexy and pouty like. "You mean...don't move like this?" Steve ground his ass into Billy's lap again.

"Fucking tease," Billy said, capturing his lips again.

They kissed for several minutes, Steve trying to ride him through their damn jeans. Billy never hated denim until this moment. Had always loved it, cherished it, found it useful and even attractive, but now, it was his worst fucking enemy, keeping him from Steve's dick. And keeping Steve from his.

Billy broke the kiss and squeezed Steve's hips, stilling his movements.

Steve looked wrecked. Lips red, cheeks flushed. And the hickey. Billy leaned forward and licked at it, once, twice, then sucked on it again, hoping to darken the purple, maybe make it a little bigger.

They locked eyes, both a little breathless. Steve's hands found their way into Billy's hair and sweet mother of god did his fingers feel good on his head.

Billy searched Steve's eyes, noticing the green and gold flecks in the brown. His pupils still wide from lust or the dim lighting, didn't matter, he looked hot regardless. And a question lingering in his gaze, Billy didn't know what information Steve was seeking, but he'd

answer it if he could by asking his own question.

“You ever kissed a boy before?” Billy asked, aware his voice was strained.

Steve glanced down. “No. You?”

Billy bit the inside of his lip, he didn’t want to burst Steve’s bubble that this was new to him too. It wasn’t. But it’s not like he had that much experience either.

“A couple. Back in LA,” Billy said.

Steve met his eyes again and looked relieved, which, *thank fuck*. “You, uh, like girls too?”

“Not really.”

“Oh...” Steve looked surprised. “Have you tried though...with a girl?”

Billy narrowed his eyes, unsure of where this line of questioning was going, but he’d play along, anything to soothe Steve’s concerns. “Yes. Didn’t care for it though. Made out with a few more to be sure, didn’t care for any of that either.”

“Here?”

“No. Are you asking if you’re the only one I’ve hooked up with here?” Billy asked, endeared that Steve needed to feel special or some shit like that.

“Am I?”

Billy flicked his tongue out, slowly, deliberately, right at Steve and then leaned in for another kiss. He took his time with it, showing him how much he wanted him. And when he ended it and their eyes met, Steve’s still full of needing *something* more, Billy finally answered.

“Yes, Steve, you are the only person, boy or girl, that I’ve even kissed since I rolled into this shit town. Happy now?”

“Yes. Very.” It was obvious Steve was fighting back his delight and Billy didn’t want him to hide it, he wanted to see it, know that *he* made Steve happy.

Billy nipped at his neck, reveling how it caused lots of cute little squirming on his lap. And the more Steve squirmed, the hotter it got when their mouths slammed together again. And again. But for real, if Steve gyrated one more fucking time, Billy was going to pin him down.

Steve’s fingers found their way into Billy’s hair. Christ. Fuck. It felt so good. And then Steve fucking ground into his lap again and that was it, Billy had had enough of Steve mother-fucking Harrington writhing in his lap. He grabbed Steve and got him onto his back, slid between his legs and attacked his fucking mouth to swallow the whimpering squeaks coming out of those pouty, luscious lips.

And then, because he could, Billy started slow fucking him through his jeans. He needed to rut against him, screw the denim barrier, because he had no comprehension to even remove their pants, he was too far gone. Just grind, just rut, just fucking FUCK him already, just like they had practiced nuzzling, they were practicing fucking because Billy was going to fuck Steve one of these days.

“Fuck...” Steve moaned out, turning his head to break the kiss.

Billy’s found one of Steve’s hands and pinned it above his head as best he could, having to wedge it between the arm of the sofa and all. He couldn’t find Steve’s other hand...oh wait, there it was...trying to get between them, reaching for one of their zippers, which one, he couldn’t be sure.

“Billy...” Steve’s voice was wrecked and it took a second to realize he’d achieved his goal of making Steve say his first name *while* fucking moaning. “Billy...hey...wait...”

But his hips just kept grinding, that is, until he saw Steve wince. And then he immediately stopped and lifted his weight off of him. “Shit, you okay?”

Fuck, had he been too rough? Jesus Christ, he had totally lost

himself like a fucking jackass.

“I, uh...need a minute...” Steve stammered out.

Billy sat up and ran his hand through his own hair. Steve sat up too, all arms and legs flailing around to get back onto his ass. Assessing him, Billy noticed Steve was flushed, avoiding eye contact and fidgeting, especially with the crotch of his jeans. Shit, he better not be freaking out. Because Billy couldn’t handle straight up rejection from Steve, not now, not after this.

“Is there a problem?” Billy bit back his fear, sounded a little angry, hadn’t meant to but fuck, what had he done wrong?

A few locks of Steve’s hair fell over his eyes as he glanced over, shyly, then he scooted off the sofa and stood up. “I...fucking came, alright.”

It took a moment for the information to sink in. “You...” Billy waved at Steve’s crotch, “really?”

Steve turned his back to him and hunched over, clearly checking out the situation in his pants from what Billy could tell. “Just shut up.”

“Hey, it’s fine, seriously. Steve, come here...” Billy reached for the back of his thigh but Steve stepped away, out of his grasp.

“Fuck. I’m going to change...just wait here,” Steve said and bounded up the stairs.

Billy collapsed into the sofa as soon Steve was out of sight. He ran a hand down his face and checked out the situation in his own pants. Still hard. Still excited. But his crush had run the fuck away. Quite literally.

Sighing, but completely understanding, (he hadn’t come in his pants since he was like thirteen and dry humped his pillow but he still *knew* how easily it could happen), Billy got up and grabbed his jacket, digging around for his pack of smokes. The patter of Steve’s feet returning weren’t forthcoming yet so he put on his boots and stepped outside to the pool deck for a cigarette because god damn did he need one now.

He was so geared up, what was that saying, he could hammer nails with his dick he was so hard. He wouldn't bother trying though, why hammer a nail when he could just use the hammer to nail Steve. Fuck, though, the snow was coming down heavier than before, the ground had a thin covering and Billy's hands were fucking freezing.

But the smoke was worth it. Just like wiping the sauce of Steve's lips had been worth it. A risk, yes, but the payoff had been so damn good.

The sound of the sliding glass door behind him brought a blast of heat from the house and a half bundled up Steve. "Here, take these."

Steve held a pair of gloves between them. Billy looked at them, noticing Steve had his own pair on and then waited a beat before taking them.

"Thanks." He put them on, because he wasn't fucking stupid.

Steve stood in the open door, half in and half out, his coat open, no scarf and his gloves, but he made no indication he was coming outside. Billy glanced down and ah, Steve was still in his socks, no shoes, hence why he was still standing inside and leaning out the door.

"We're supposed to get eight to ten inches tonight," Steve said.

Billy snorted. "You fucking wish."

Their eyes met and they both chuckled. "Not packing ten inches, Hargrove?"

A plume of smoke billowed out of Billy's mouth. "You could find out..."

Steve's eyes opened up into that fucking innocent doe-eyed look he always had, the one that made Billy want to eat him up like a lollipop.

"I didn't mean to leave you hanging...why don't you come back in and I'll...we can...you know..."

“Oh, we can...you know...” Billy mocked him playfully. “Say it, Harrington.”

“Take care of it.” Steve motioned toward the obvious erection in Billy’s jeans.

“Take care of it...what, like a puppy? You going to feed it, take it for a walk too? Might need you to be more specific here, not really understanding *what* you’re taking care of,” Billy said, tossing the half-burned cigarette into the snow.

“Just get in here.” Steve moved aside to let Billy through.

But Billy didn’t move, not yet, he could wait him out. He shrugged and looked up at the falling snowflakes instead as if they had all the time in the world and he wasn’t still crazy aroused and a simple huff and a puff would blow his house down.

“Uh...it’s freezing,” Steve said, pulling his coat together.

“No shit. Did you grow up here?” Billy asked, holding his gloved hand out, palm up to catch some snowflakes and watch them melt against the material.

“Yeah.”

“Well, I didn’t, pretty boy.”

It took him a moment, but Steve finally got it. Thank fuck, because Billy knew the kid was smart, just liked proof of it every now and then. This was one of Billy’s first snowfalls and he’d never had the chance as a kid to stand in it as it came down or build a snow fort or have snowball fight.

Steve looked up at the falling snow too. “This is the type of snow that comes down fast and sticks as long as the ground is cold, which it’s been cold for weeks so it’s going to stick. Sometimes we get these big, wet snowflakes, they’re huge, but...not tonight. You’ll like the big ones. You can catch them on your tongue, you know...”

Billy tilted his head back and stuck his tongue out. He felt the cold hit of them, but it wasn’t that exciting to be honest.

Steve chuckled. "I meant you can catch the big ones on your tongue, these little ones are lame."

Several smaller flakes landed on Billy's eyelashes. He blinked a few times, irritated by the wet and heavy feel of them. Fuck this. He'd felt enough snow for the night, the rest of the winter really, and he wanted to edge his way back into Steve's warmth, and he wasn't just talking about the heat in the fucking house.

Steve stepped aside again and Billy noticed he was shivering. Fuck he wanted to warm him up, but they still hadn't addressed what happened and he wasn't sure if Steve would be embarrassed or not if he brought it up. Honestly, it was a massive compliment that Steve had come so quickly, Billy didn't want him to feel insecure about it or anything.

Once they were tucked back inside, coats and Billy's shoes off, Steve wandered into the living room and Billy followed. Because how could he not. Steve was like the earth and Billy the moon, forever in his orbit, circling and waiting to be seen.

And waiting to be touched.

~*~

Steve sat down on the sofa. THE sofa. You know, the one where he totally creamed his fucking pants after a few minutes of being dry humped by Billy Hargrove. You know, THE Billy, the one that probably wasn't even attracted to him anymore because he was so turned off about what a fucking loser Steve was.

He was surprised Billy hadn't left yet, even more surprised when he sat down next to him and pressed their thighs together, still sporting a visible erection.

Steve fiddled with the cuff of his sleeve. It had gotten a bit askew around his wrist when Billy had it pinned the fuck down. Jesus that had been hot. Like *really* fucking hot. He *liked* being pinned down

by Billy. He liked being *underneath* him. It had been so hot, the hottest thing ever, so much so that Steve had come before they really even got started from the friction and the idea of Billy being on top of him to *really* fuck him. He'd let him. Maybe not tonight, but if they were, you know, *together-together*.

And now they were just sitting next to each other, awkwardly quiet, and Steve was still fiddling with his sleeve even though it was clearly back in place already.

Steve jumped when Billy's hand landed on his thigh.

And Billy's hand jumped off of his thigh when Steve flinched.

"Shit, sorry." Steve said.

"Why are you sorry?" Billy sounded frustrated. Which made Steve feel even worse.

"Jesus. I don't know." Steve ran his hand through his hair, he just couldn't get it together. He wanted Billy so badly that he was practically cock blocking himself.

"Relax, pretty boy. You've got nothing to worry about." Billy's hand found his knee this time.

Steve shook his head. And finally looked over to meet Billy's eyes, which he'd been avoiding since they sat down. In his eyes he found acceptance, for god knows what, everything probably, and it soothed and rattled him at the same time.

He *wanted* Billy sexually. Wanted to jump him, strip off his clothes, take him to his bedroom and ride out the rest of the night together on top of the sheets with the lights on, because there was no way he was going to miss out on seeing every little thing that happened, but he couldn't believe how much he *liked* Billy.

He hadn't fully considered *dating* him until he'd been pinned underneath him, not really, not like with feelings and dates and family dinners but Christ, now that he realized how much he liked Billy, he wanted a relationship. And Billy didn't seem like the type to do relationships.

"If a girl came like that, the guy would think he was a stud," Billy said randomly, gently.

Steve looked down at the hand on his knee then back to those beautiful blue eyes. Jesus Christ, Billy was trying to fucking reassure him. Who the hell was this guy and what had he done with mean-as-fuck Billy Hargrove?

"You...think you're a stud because I came...like that?"

Billy flashed one of his wicked smiles. "Hell yeah."

Holy shit. Billy was fucking *proud*.

"Wait, for real?"

"Yeah, for real. You're cute, you know, when you get all flustered," Billy said. "I *like* you, in case you haven't noticed."

And just like that, Steve swallowed down the lump he hadn't realized he'd been holding. Oh. Billy *liked* him. Like, *liked-him, liked-him*.

"And I want to get you off. As many times as you'll let me," Billy continued.

"I, uh, want to..." Steve motioned at him, "do that too. For you."

Billy's eyebrow quirked up. "No time like the present, Harrington."

Steve hesitated. "How do you...uh, want it?"

Billy actually laughed. "Jesus Christ you're adorable, you know that?" And then Billy leaned over and kissed him.

Steve melted into the kiss. Okay, *this* he knew how to do, he could kiss and maybe figure out how to get Billy off, he wanted to, for sure, just wasn't sure the best way or if it'd be the same as when he took care of himself. And maybe it was all the talking that tripped Steve up because when they were making out and *grinding* he was in his element, he knew what to do, but when they talked, he felt like he couldn't say what he wanted to say.

It was Billy's turn to enjoy so Steve took the lead, cupping the side of his face and gently pushing him into the back of the sofa. He knew how to set the pace with a girl, but with Billy, he wanted all the paces at the same time—fast, hard, slow, sweet, gentle.

He chose gentle, though he didn't know why. It just felt right.

He wanted to straddle his lap again but then he wouldn't have access to his pants as much so Steve started pulling on Billy's tucked in shirt, dislodging it as they kissed. Billy broke the kiss to help him, unbuttoning it quickly then wrestling it off his arms. Steve tore his own shirt over his head and tossed it.

Their lips came together with more heat this time, a fire igniting in the gentleness, and Steve felt the familiar pull of blood rushing south. He'd be hard again in no time, especially now that Billy's hands were all over his bare chest, fingertips pressing into his pecks, sliding along his ribs down to his pants.

Steve reached for Billy's belt buckle, finding it awkward to try and undo it from his position, but he finally managed to get it open. Once he had Billy's jeans unzipped, he tugged at them and Billy lifted his hips to help them off. But before Steve could reach into his briefs, Billy was fumbling with Steve's belt and zipper so he leaned back and let him.

"Stand up," Billy husked out.

Blood rushed back into Steve's legs as he got to his feet. Billy pulled him to stand between his open legs and made quick work of getting Steve's pants down to his thighs. And then his boxers. This was supposed to be Billy's turn but here they were, Steve's half-hard dick in Billy's face and oh fuck, in his fucking mouth.

Steve looked down as Billy fucking swallowed him whole, admiring those pretty, dark lashes.

"Jesus..." Steve breathed out, because Billy knew what he was doing. "Hey, wait, it's your turn..."

Billy cupped Steve's balls and popped his mouth off his cock. "You

really want me to stop?”

“No.”

“Then shut the fuck up.” Billy’s tongue lapped at the head and then bobbed down on his cock again.

How in the world was Billy Hargrove generous in bed? Steve could barely believe it. Loved it, fucking *needed* it after some of the girls he’d been with, but Christ, he was a dream come true. Even still, Steve considered himself generous and attentive and wasn’t going to let Billy have all the fun of being the pleaser.

It was obvious that Billy loved sucking cock and Steve hoped he’d be as enthusiastic about it too. He still hadn’t seen Billy’s dick, well, he had in the showers at school, but that wasn’t the same. Fuck it, you know what, Steve just couldn’t wait.

He stepped back, grinning as Billy leaned forward to chase after his dick, but couldn’t quite latch onto it again. “Huh uh, no. Your turn.”

Billy raised his eyes, licking his wet lips. “Fine then, pretty boy, show me what you got.”

“Take off your pants,” Steve said, lowering to his knees. The sofa was not the ideal height for this, but whatever, it’d do for now. He’d eventually get Billy upstairs to his room.

“You can just use your hand,” Billy said, folding his jeans and placing them on the floor. The fucker was neat and tidy too. He’d definitely been a victim to the body snatchers, aliens must have landed over Christmas break and invaded his mind because *this* was not the same Billy that had nearly sent him to the fucking hospital.

Steve met his eyes and gave him the *stop being a dumbass* look. Billy was hard and his dick was beautiful, like the rest of his body. And a good size too, not small, not too big, just right for Steve and his first adventures into dick sucking land.

And in case they ever got around to the *other* thing, Steve was pleased to know he could probably take Billy and not be split the fuck open. And after being pinned down by him, loving how it felt to

have his weight press him down, Steve wanted everything Billy would give him. *Everything.*

Billy's hand threaded into Steve's hair, but he didn't push or pull on him, just carded his fingers through it a few times, gently resting his hand there. Steve appreciated that, knowing Billy wasn't going to fucking choke him or anything. He'd heard horror stories from some of the guys in school about how aggressive they'd be with the girls, but that just didn't sound fun or pleasant and Steve had never been like that, always respectful of the other person.

Billy clearly respected him. And he loved that.

Steve wrapped his hand around Billy's cock, noticing how it twitched at the initial touch and then leaned forward and licked the head, not full on but around the slit, one side then the other. The fingers in his hair stroked his head again. It didn't taste like anything really, the silky skin of Billy's cock felt good on his tongue, easy and inviting.

He grabbed the base of Billy's cock with his right hand, wet his lips and sucked the entire head into his mouth. Billy's butt must have tensed, straining him upwards into his mouth out of reflex.

"Fuck, Steve," Billy moaned out. "You sure you've never done this before?"

"I've barely done anything yet," Steve said between licking his lips and gathering more saliva in his mouth. How Billy had taken him whole the first try was beyond him.

Steve went further this time, about halfway down before having to pull back and try again. And then bobbed all the way down, his lips meeting his own hand still wrapped around the base of his cock.

There was no rhythm at first, he just took his time to get each suck right, learning as he went and it was only about a minute before he got used to it that it was over.

"I'm gonna come," Billy said, tugging gently on Steve's hair, urging him off.

Steve let himself be pulled off, not realizing how close Billy was even

though he'd said it. Billy took over with his hand and came hard all over Steve's face because, well, Steve hadn't thought to move the fuck back.

Which, fine, but like he had meant to swallow because that was always fucking hot, but face shots were pretty hot too. Sometimes hotter even.

Billy's eyes closed briefly as his hand stopped moving and he shuddered in pleasure.

Steve reached for his discarded shirt and turned it inside out before using it to wipe off his face. He did his own laundry, thankfully, and it didn't escape him that this was THE shirt that had made him realize his attraction to Billy and now it was covered in *his* come.

But honest to God, the best part of the entire thing was that Billy had come really, really fast, like in under a minute fast and that made Steve feel so much better about coming in his pants prematurely. Even though Billy seemed chill about it, supportive and proud of it even, Steve still felt awkward that he'd hadn't had the self-control to wait until they got their damn pants off.

"Damn Steve." Billy sounded very relaxed.

Steve smirked. "You want to watch that movie now?"

Billy eyed him like he was crazy. "We're not done, get up here." He patted the space beside him.

Steve scrambled into the spot, letting Billy arrange them so he resting against the arm of the sofa on his back with Billy leaning over him between his legs.

While seeing Billy come had really turned him on—*again*—having Billy's sinful lips around his cock nearly did him in. Which was the point, he supposed, to be done in. But sweet Jesus, that tongue was *on* him, up and down him, knew what it was doing, knew exactly where to lick and stroke and Billy knew how to get his entire mouth around him, hold his damn balls and make it all seem so fucking effortless.

Steve watched his cock disappear into Billy's mouth and Christ was that the new hottest thing he'd ever seen. He put his hand in Billy's hair, supporting his head because Billy was at an odd angle that didn't seem comfortable and Steve wasn't sure he could come quickly this time.

He was definitely sure he didn't *want* to come quickly, not with how amazing this felt, Billy's mouth was a little slice of heaven. Best blow job ever, hands down. Billy was just so enthusiastic, like really into it, not bored or just hurrying him up, he was taking his time, flashing those blue eyes up at Steve, which, let's be honest, was orgasm inducing all on its own, but damn, taking his sweet time was not something Steve had expected from him at all.

Then Billy dropped down and sucked one of his balls into his mouth, his hand slowly sliding up and down Steve's cock, perfectly wet, perfectly gripped. Fuck, no one had ever done this to Steve before. He didn't even think it was a thing, but now that he knew, he loved it, wanted to get at Billy's later, return the favor.

Steve savored every single second, especially when Billy went back to sucking his dick and setting a pace that kept him crazy turned on but not quite tipped over the edge. This had to happen again. They had to do this again and again, fuck, Steve didn't just want a blow job or having his balls sucked on, he wanted to cuddle afterwards, twine their fingers together and whisper about their lives and how their day went. He wanted to wake up with Billy, make him coffee while he stood in his kitchen looking sexy in his white briefs, chatting about how well he slept.

He wanted to be able to kiss him whenever he pleased. At home, in their cars, at school, in front of their friends, not that they'd do that in public, they couldn't, they *wouldn't*, but it was a nice thought, because Steve *liked* Billy.

Maybe it was their insane chemistry or the way their eye contact nearly brought him to his knees, or maybe it was something deeper, something more spiritual between them, didn't matter really, whatever it was it had hit Steve a hundred miles an hour in the last few days and he hoped it never stopped.

"I'm close..." Steve warned just as Billy tipped him over that edge with a faster pace and more pressure.

But Billy didn't back off, which thank fuck, because Steve wanted to come in his mouth, wanted to see if Billy would spit or swallow. Didn't care which, just wanted to know that about him, know who he was, what he'd do. He wanted to know everything about Billy, like his favorite color and how he looked with come in his fucking mouth.

Steve came hard, which surprised him after having already come recently, but Jesus, seeing those blue eyes move up his body and approach his face, seeing Billy's lips shut as he popped off of Steve's dick and seeing him fucking *swallow* like it was a damn performance or some shit, a show *just* for Steve's pleasure, was about all he could handle.

Steve grabbed the back of Billy's head and pulled him in for a kiss, tasting himself in the process.

Billy's arms shook a little from exerting himself so Steve broke the kiss and Billy's head immediately dropped to his shoulder as he snuggled up on top of him.

"Hey Billy..." Steve said, running his fingers through the blond hair near his face.

"Hmmm?" Billy sounded half asleep. A little nap would do them both good.

"In case you haven't noticed..." Steve said, "I like you too."

Notes for the Chapter:

Steve fell for Billy waaaaay faster than I thought he would BUT I guess that's because Billy is just a sweet little love bug under all that angst.